

The Bushwick Girls

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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**Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana**

December 2018

Expected Date of Graduation

May 2019

Abstract

I will be writing a full-length play that challenges me to push beyond any playwriting skill level I have previously attempted. I will write a historical fiction play that takes place in both 1949 Bushwick, Brooklyn and 2017 Bushwick, Brooklyn. All events will take place in one house. The 1949 tenants' and the 2017 tenants' stories will overlap to explore the issues that immigrants have faced in our country for years. Additionally, all of my characters will be women because as a theatre artist I am interested in telling stories centering around women. There are not enough complicated women onstage, and we deserve to be seen in all our wonderful complexity. We also deserve to be seen in all our diversity. Feminism must be intersectional and putting more white women onstage is not good enough.

After I have completed the first draft of this play I will set it aside for a short time to get the necessary space from it before returning to it for the first revision process. I will make an initial revision focusing on plot, making sure there are no plot holes. Then I will put the play through a week-long workshop with a professional director and actors. Throughout this week I will make edits to the script in preparation for a public reading at the end of the workshop.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Thomas Henning Horan for advising me on this project. His help during this process was as indispensable as his mentorship to me over the last three years.

I would like to thank Devon Hayakawa for reading many pages of this play and talking through its problems with me, acting as my dramaturg.

I would like to thank Matthew Reeder for agreeing to share his highly valuable time with me to direct a workshop of this play. His feedback was invaluable, and his encouragement and support were exactly what I needed to stay afloat during the sprint to the finish line.

I would like to thank Jennifer Blackmer for her support and mentorship as my playwriting professor and a representation of what I want to be when I grow up.

I would like to thank all the actors who gave their time and talents to my play: Brenda Ortiz, Abigail Carter, Erica Dilworth, Zariya Butler, Margaret Williams, Gwyneth Burton, Emily Pazik, and Carly Masterson.

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Process Statement:

Theatre has the unique ability to tell a story by creating a real human connection between audience and performer. I want to use that unique ability to tell stories about people who usually go unheard. Throughout this process statement, I will outline every step of my process in detail, including the planning, researching, discovery, outlining, drafting, researching again, drafting again, revisions, and a reflection on the workshop experience.

I began thinking about this play in the Spring of 2017 when Donald Trump announced the end of the DACA program. The incessantly depressing news made me want to turn my frustration into something positive. It made me want to tell a story that focused on immigrants, specifically immigrant women.

Writing a play is not an easy task. With every new play comes a long discovery process that requires a substantial amount of research. I wanted to challenge myself to write something on a much larger scale than I previously have. I chose to write a historical fiction play, taking place in two time periods. This particular play required so much more research than I expected.

I knew from the beginning that I wanted to write a play that told a story of immigrants over generations. It is so easy for people to forget that sixty years ago there were Irish, German, Jewish, and Italian immigrants coming to the United States in the same way that Mexican, Indian, Chinese, Cuban, and Salvadorian immigrants come to the United States today. I wanted to see what happened when I overlapped an older immigration story with a modern one.

At this point, I began research on American immigration throughout the twentieth century into today. I found that, in the 1950s, many young women moved to Brooklyn alone to find work in department stores. Once they had jobs they would begin sending money back to their families. Many of these women were immigrants from countries like Ireland, Germany,

Poland, etc. These women often lived in houses specifically for young women, run by a single landlady. The women living in these houses became like family to each other. I wanted to know more about the world these women would have lived in, and for that, I turned to other art forms. I read books and plays, watched movies and listened to podcasts. Each work of fiction or non-fiction gave me new information to use in my play.

Books

- *Brooklyn* by Colm Tobin
 - The fictional story of a young Irish immigrant to Brooklyn in the early 1950s. She resides in a boarding house with a strict landlady and three other young women by night and works in a department store by day.
- *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson
 - A non-fiction exploration of the decades-long migration of African Americans who fled the south for cities in the north between the 1920s and the 1970s.
- *Here in Berlin* by Cristina Garcia
 - The fictional story of an interviewer returning to East Berlin to piece together a portrait of the city by interviewing people who were in East Berlin during and after World War II.
- *We Are Not Ourselves* by Matthew Thomas
 - A fictional multigenerational story of an Irish American family living in Brooklyn in the 1940s. The author explores America's promise of domestic bliss in a post-World War II America.

Plays

- *Stage Door* by Edna Ferber
 - The fictional story of a boarding house for young women actors in the 1930s in New York City.
 - I read this play to glean some ideas about how to write dialogue between large groups of women. I also pulled some ideas for my actress character, Ariella, from this play. Specifically, I found I really enjoyed seeing characters run lines on stage, so I used that idea when Ariella makes her first appearance.
- *Borrowed Babies* by Jennifer Blackmer
 - The fictional story of a group of young women in the 1950s living together in a house during their final semester of college to learn homemaking skills.
 - Jennifer Blackmer has one of my favorite writing styles. I love the way she plays with time in her plays. *Borrowed Babies* takes place in the 1950s

and the 1980s. In the play, time oscillates seamlessly back and forth. I wanted to replicate some of this back and forth in time in my own play. I do not think my attempt was entirely successful, but that is one of the aspects I hope to address in the revision process.

- *A Taste of Honey* by Shelagh Delaney
 - A play written in 1956 that follows a young female protagonist as she tries to find her footing in the world.
 - I read *A Taste of Honey* because I wanted an example of a play actually written close to the time period I am trying to replicate. I tried to use some of the old-fashioned realism style in my own play to make it feel more authentic.
- *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard
 - *Arcadia* is a very famous play about a young woman who discovers a mathematical proof, but she dies before she reaches adulthood and does not receive credit for her work.
 - This play also plays with two interwoven time periods, and I used it to inform my own multi-time period writing. I also used it to inform my little mathematician character, Gloria. I loved the idea of including a scientifically minded woman in my story.

TV/Movies

- *The Marvelous Mrs. Mazel* by Amazon Prime
 - This television series follows a young Jewish woman in the 1950s whose husband leaves her, and suddenly she finds herself on a standup comedy stage absolutely bringing the house down.
 - The character was Mrs. Mazel was a major inspiration for my Jewish actress character, Ariella. I wanted Ariella to have much of Mrs. Mazel's spunk and self-confidence.
- *One Day at a Time* by Netflix
 - This television series follows a Cuban American family through their struggles as Cuban Americans. It highlights their love of culture and the importance they place on home and family.
 - I drew from the themes of this show for my own play. Everyone wants home and family, and many immigrants have those things taken from them.

Podcasts

- Podcivility: *DACA* (September 7, 2017)
 - This podcast episode commented on the Trump Administration's discontinuation of the DACA program. I talked about the history of the DACA program and the struggles that Dreamers will face when their permits expire.
 - I used this podcast as an informational resource for my play because I knew very little about the DACA program or what the discontinuation of

the DACA program really meant going into this.

Each piece gave me more information about the world I wanted to create in my play.

After gleaning ideas from these various sources, I did a little more technical research about exactly when Irish immigrants were immigrating to the United States, and when that immigration would have overlapped with the Great Migration or the immigration of other peoples from other countries. I found that the 1950s were known as the decade of ‘doom and gloom’ in Ireland. They essentially experienced a second potato famine. In the 1950s, approximately half-a-million people left the Irish Republic. Many young Irish people immigrated to the United States in the 1950s to make money to send back to their families, even though many Irish people frowned on these people who left for America, and often broke off communication with them (Glynn).

I also learned there was a wave of immigration post-World War II from several countries in Europe, including Germany. I had already considered the idea of having one of my young woman characters be from East Berlin, and I decided to run with that idea. Many East Berliners fled in the late 1940s. I also found that opportunities for young African American women were increasing in the United States, especially in the North in the latter half of the 1940s. Piecing all this information together I decided 1949 was the ideal year to tell my story.

In my initial brain dump, I explored the idea of the modern-day story centering around a family with two illegal immigrant parents, and a Dreamer child. I quickly moved away from this idea because I knew I wanted a group of young women living together in 1949 and adding an entire family in 2017 would have created an overwhelming number of characters. Instead, I decided to focus on one young Dreamer trying to work her way through her final year of school. This choice came with its own challenges. Characters on stage have to have someone to talk to

and interact with or their stories quickly become boring. I decided to place a landlady character in both 2017 and 1949 to carry similar thematic responsibilities.

At this point, I was in the discovery process. During this period, I got to know my characters and what I wanted their stories to be. I broke down each character into her goals, obstacles, values, and quirks. You can read through my full discovery packet in Appendix A. I also did research on each of their countries of origin. For example, I became very familiar with what it was like for young German women in post-World War II Berlin. West and East Berlin were divided. The British and Americans controlled West Berlin while the Soviets controlled East Berlin. The Soviet soldiers occupying East Berlin were often cruel, stealing from German citizens and raping German women. Many ex-Nazi soldiers committed suicide either because they were afraid of punishment, or because they were unaware of the full extent of horrors their country enacted (Taylor).

German girls had unusual educations, learning only about Kinder, Küche, and Kirche (Children, Cooking and Church). Young Arian women sometimes became “breeders” forced to procreate with Arian men to create a master race of Arian children (Sahrakorpi). Learning about the horrors these young German women went through made me much more empathetic for my German character, Margot. I wanted to give her a rich back story: her father died by suicide after the war, her mother sacrificed everything to get her out of the country, and she made an arrangement with a Soviet soldier to exchange sexual favors for food. This backstory makes her relationship with Ariella, the Jewish girl, extremely complicated.

Jewish Americans have a rich history. There were three waves of Jewish immigration to the United States: Sephardic Jews (1650-1720), German Jews (1800-1880), Eastern European Jews (1880-1920). I decided I wanted Ariella’s family to have immigrated more recently so I

focused on the Eastern European Jewish immigration. This wave of immigrants consisted mostly of Jews forced to flee Poland and Russia. By 1914 the Jewish population in New York City exceeded 1.5 million. Many Jewish families established successful businesses in the textile industry. New York City became the American capital of Judaism.

Starting in the 1870s, at the same time the Jim Crow Laws were passed, Anti-Semitism in New York City skyrocketed. The police force claimed that 50% of all crimes were committed by Jews. The Jewish population spread out in the 1920s and 30s leaving room for Jewish life and culture to grow in New York City. It was also during this time that a large chunk of the Jewish population moved to Brooklyn and other surrounding burrows, where they established tight-knit Jewish communities. We do not often learn about America's history of Anti-Semitism which is a shame, because I was surprised by its prevalence.

Researching for my African American character Gloria was very interesting as well. The Great Migration was the relocation of more than 6 million African Americans from South to North. Many people left to escape violence, many left to find better jobs, and many left to find a better education. I decided I wanted Gloria to pursue an education. I wanted her to dream big, so she focused her sights on NASA. This was not an impossible dream because Dorothy Johnson Vaughan became the first African American woman to become an acting supervisor at NASA in 1947 (Chatelain).

I knew from the beginning of the process that I wanted to include an Irish character. I was lucky to find a collection of interviews with Irish immigrants in the latter half of the 20th century, filled with stories about life in Ireland, the trip to the United States, and the troubles that came with their new lives. In one story the children in an Irish family had one pair of shoes that they shared between the two of them (Gray). One piece of culture I found particularly interesting was

that young women were taught to be extremely innocent and desexualized. This idea was closely tied to the expansive presence of Catholicism in the country. Young Irish women are taught “who to avoid” and how to “stand firm” while remaining innocent of matters of sex and sexuality. When Mary, one of the interviewees, began to switch her point of view away from this asexual take on women, she changed her mindset to view her body as something that needed to be protected from all the ‘fellas’ who would surely take advantage of her (Gray). This information was very informative when I was creating Bridget, my Irish character. I gave Bridget reservations about openly discussing sex, which became very interesting with the conversation came up with Ariella.

Researching my Mexican character in 2017, Gabriella, was a more difficult research task because there is less literature on this controversial subject. To get an authentic idea of what it is like to be a Dreamer I got in touch with my friend’s sister, Viridiana, a Dreamer herself. I sent Viridiana these questions:

1. How old were you when you came to the US?
2. Why did your parents move here?
3. Do you remember Obama announcing the start of the DACA program?
4. Do you remember where you were when you got the news that Trump was phasing out the DACA program?
 - a. What was your initial reaction?
5. What do people often assume incorrectly about the Dreamer experience?
6. What do you want people to know about DACA and the Dreamers?
7. What is your plan for the future now that DACA is ending?
8. What is your biggest fear going forward?

I received these answers:

1. My parents brought me to the U.S when I was 2 months old so I honestly didn't even remember anything about Mexico.
2. My parents moved for the same reason many people have come. They wanted a better life for their kids and they thought this country was the best place to do that.
3. I honestly don't remember the start of the program. I was probably like 10 at the time. My parents knew about it because I have had it for a while now. It didn't make much of a difference because I wasn't old enough to work back then or drive so the exact use wasn't very obvious to me. Today, however, it definitely makes the difference.
4. I am not huge on keeping up with current events so I didn't know about Trump phasing the program out until I got home and my parents told me. Once they told me I felt scared and worried about my future.
5. I haven't gotten many assumptions but I've had some think that we are too privileged. The idea of us getting a SSN and getting help from the government when we weren't born here appears privileged to them.
6. I'd like to let them know that that is exactly what we are - dreamers. We dream of being able to achieve the "American Dream" like everyone else in this country. I want them to know that DACA makes a huge difference. It gives us opportunity and some hope for our futures here in the U.S. It helps us know that we have a shot at the "American Dream".
7. Well, honestly, I haven't thought that far. I didn't want to because I didn't want to try and imagine my life without it. I still have the majority of my life in front of me so it's going to be a longer road without it with more challenges and humps to get over. I feel like it will consist of a lot of extra work and searching for alternatives. I also fear for those children who will be brought in years to come. They won't have the same opportunities I did, even if it was for a short period of time.
8. My biggest fear is that things will get too hard for me and I won't be able to do it. I won't have the ability of making my parents sacrifice of bringing us to this country worthwhile.

Her answers to my questions were indispensable in my creation of Gabriella. I drew from

Viridiana's reluctance to plan for the future because it is just too frightening to do so. I also drew from her desire to make her parents' sacrifice worthwhile. Gabriella also feels these pressures and works very hard to make the most of her opportunity.

After discovering my characters, it was time to figure out the plot. In the past, I have run into problems with my plays being too focused on relationships between people at the expense of

plot. This time I wanted to make sure to fix this problem. To do that I started with a Pixar story structure, which looks like this:

Once upon a time...

Every day he/she/they...

Until one day...

Because of that...

Because of that...

Because of that...

Until finally...

This is a structure I learned in my first playwriting class. It helps you to create a continuous story with a drive all the way through it. It helps you focus on the points of the story that build off one another. My first Pixar story structure for this play looked like this:

Once upon a time, there were three young women living together in one house in Brooklyn with their landlady.

Every day they would get up, get dressed, go to work, come home, study/practice/cook, and go to bed.

Until one day an eviction notice arrives at the door (for their landlady)

Because of that, the girls learn that their landlady is broke and has been undercharging them

Because of that, the girls feel partially responsible for the situation

Because of that, (and because of the fact that this is their home) they come up with a plan to help.

Because of that, a fourth young woman moves in.

Because of that, tensions rise.

Until finally they have to move out.

This initial Pixar story structure was very focused on the first half of the play and the start of the conflict, but I feel it served its purpose and helped me decide on a plot that could drive me through to the end of the play.

At this point, I was ready to outline my play. I went scene by scene and created a detailed outline for both time period including what characters were on stage, where they were, what they were doing, what they wanted, and what changed by the end of the scene. I even color-coded by characters so that I could track the arcs of each character at a glance. The outline of scene 1 looked like this.

Scene 1: Exposition and Inciting incident.

• 2017.

- Location: Gabriella's apartment (the same as Ariella's room)
- Time of day: Evening.
- Ms. Andrews & Gabriella
 - Ms. Andrews wants:
 - Her cat back from Gabriella
 - To know when Gabriella plans to move out
 - Gabriella wants:
 - A day off from cat sitting because of an upcoming test
 - To renew her lease
- Inciting incident: Ms. Andrews mentions the end of DACA.
- Gabriella tells Ms. Andrews she's not planning on leaving.
- Ms. Andrews is shocked. She pries into Gabriella's future plans
- Gabriella tells Ms. Andrews she's focused on graduating and nothing else. One thing at a time.
- WHAT TAKES US TO THE PAST?
 - Discussion of immigrants living in the house. Maybe Ms. Andrew says, "I'm sorry, I can't have an illegal immigrant living in this house." Maybe Gabriella says something like "this house wants me here" or "the house doesn't mind" or something else... nothing I just wrote quite works. I'm just letting ideas out onto paper.

• 1949

- Location: Kitchen
- Time of day: Evening.
- Bridget, Gloria, Ariella & Ms. Winslow

- Bridget wants:
 - To make dinner. Gloria and Ariella are getting in her way, both with their need for help in studying and rehearsing, and also because they keep requesting food/spices from their own cultures.
- Gloria wants:
 - To study. Bridget is setting the table and moving her study materials. Ariella keeps talking over her, reciting lines.
- Ariella wants:
 - To rehearse. (She has to be her very best at this next preview performance because this producer she wants to impress will be there. Trying not to sound too Jewish. The producer is one of the producers of the show.)
 - To have Bridget and Gloria's full attention. Neither Bridget nor Gloria are giving her their full attention.
- Inciting incident: the eviction notice arrives
- Action:
 - They live in making dinner (Bridget doesn't set a place for herself at the table), studying, and rehearsing for a minute before...
 - The eviction notice arrives (with the mail which Gloria runs to check. She's waiting for an acceptance letter)
 - The girls try to figure out how this could have happened. Have they all been paying rent on time and in full? Yes, they have.
 - Ms. Winslow enters.
 - The girls ask Ms. Winslow for an explanation.
 - She tells them she's been undercharging them.
 - The girls try to figure out a solution. What will they do next?
 - Ms. Winslow says it's her responsibility. She'll figure something out. (she doesn't seem like she actually will).
 - Ms. Winslow exits.
 - The girls devise a plan to save the house.
- What is different in the world at the end of scene 1?
 - 2017: Gabriella has to come up with a plan for when her DACA permit expires. What will she do next? She too has a fire under her ass to find a solution.
 - 1949: The girls now know that they're living situation is not stable. They have a fire under their ass to find a solution.

I created this outline for eight total scenes (see Appendix B). I also created separate outlines for each character's story arc, so that I could go back through my full outline and make sure I was hitting the necessary plot points in each person's story. Ariella's outline looked like this:

Ariella's storyline

- Ariella is in a play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and she is working really hard to impress a specific producer that will be coming to the preview performance.
 - She does this by rehearsing lines with the girls

- Trying not to sound too Jewish
- Ariella does well at the preview performance and the producer asks her to dinner
 - Ariella asks Bridget to help her pick a dress
- The producer propositions Ariella
 - Ariella becomes unusually quiet. She stops rehearsing with the girls.
- Ariella begins spending time with the producer and in exchange, she is cast in his show.
 - One of the girls eventually asks her about it and she tells all.
 - The girl she's talking to tells her she doesn't need this one producer to make it. She can make it without him. She should NOT allow him to treat her that way.
- Ariella tells the producer she's finished.
- Ariella is fired from the play she's in.

After creating an arc outline for each character, I went back through my master outline and added in any plot points I had let slip the first time (see Appendix B). Then I thought it was time to start writing, but I quickly realized I was wrong. I needed to do some more research on how these characters sound. I went back to the library and conducted painstaking research on turns of phrase commonly used not only in each location but also in the time period. Finding this specific information was a challenge that I often found myself getting frustrated with. See Appendix A: “Discovery Packet” pages 4 and 6 for some examples.

Finally, it was time to start drafting. I decided to section off my first draft into five sets of twenty pages so that by the end of my first draft I would have one hundred pages. I wrote these five sets of pages over five weeks, writing twenty pages each week. This pace was grueling, but it kept me very focused on the play. There was very little time in those five weeks when I wasn't thinking about my girls. Because I had planned out my story in quite a bit of detail before I even started drafting, the drafting process went pretty smoothly. You can read my complete first draft in Appendix C.

After my first draft was complete I set it aside over winter break and for all of January to get much-needed space from the work. When you're too close to something you've created you miss the things that need to be fixed. After this much-needed break, I entrusted my first draft it to

my dramaturg, Devon Hayakawa, who was kind enough to read it closely and sit down to discuss it with me. I asked her to tell me what she thought the story was about. She thought it was about the importance of found family, and the emotional effect of not having a permanent home. We talked extensively about each character, specific moments in the play, and overall themes. After talking with Devon, I felt I was ready to work on it again, but before I did so I wanted to hear it out loud. I hoped that hearing it out loud before I read through it again myself would let me experience the story as an audience member rather than as its creator.

On Friday, February 8th I invited a small group of actor friends to my house to read the first draft of *The Bushwick Girls* in my living room. Hearing it out loud without having looked over the script beforehand was a very educational experience. I laughed at some of my own jokes, which was a real treat, but I also noticed some moments which were clearly underdeveloped and some pieces of information that were revealed too quickly. I took meticulous notes on this reading, jotting down things that I experienced as an audience member (see Appendix D).

After this first reading, I immediately began the first round of revisions. In this first round, I focused on fixing the problems with Gloria's character. I got feedback from my friend Zariya in the living room reading that Gloria comes off as an angry black character in the fight with Ariella. I wanted to fight against that stereotype, not perpetuate it, so I revisited that scene specifically in this draft to make sure that Gloria was not the one initiating this argument. In retrospect I went too far in this draft and made Bridget the aggressor instead, which doesn't work for the characters in the way I've set them up, however, this revision helped me learn about the characters in that scene and their boundaries.

In this draft, I also revised a few things about Gabriella's character. I knew I wanted to expand her and thread her plot further through the second half of the play, but I started by changing her major. Rather than having her on a pre-med track, I decided to make her a Women and Gender Studies major trying to get into a grad school to study Psychology. She wants to be a psychologist that specializes in caring for women. I think this change serves the story better because it gives her a clearer reason to be passionate about these women living in Brooklyn in 1949. If she actively wants to learn about them the trips into the past will be more justified. I sent this completed second draft to Matthew Reeder, a directing professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance who agreed to direct a week-long workshop of my play.

I met with Matt to discuss the play on March 21st. He gave me feedback on what he thought the play was about and what he thought the main action was. I jotted down notes on our conversation which can be found in Appendix E. I loved Matt's articulation of the central idea of the play. He said it is about "people living in a world they feel that other people don't have a right to." He also pointed out that Ariella and Margot's relationship feels very central to the plot, and it feels like their relationship is the most unusual and interesting from a theatrical perspective. Seeing a director's point of view like this was very beneficial for me as a writer, especially because I trust Matt, as a director and I respect and admire his work. After this meeting with Matt I went back to the script and completed another round of revisions.

In this set of revisions, I addressed Gabriella's storyline more. I rearranged a few scenes and tried to complicate the relationship between Gabriella and Mrs. Andrews by giving Gabriella something concrete to want from Mrs. Andrews. She wants information about the girls who lived here in 1949. Mrs. Andrews reveals she knows a little about the house at the time early on in the play, and then Gabriella can push her for more information each time she shows up. I also

readdressed the big fight with Ariella. I changed Bridget's character in that scene back to what it was in the first draft, and I adjusted the fight so that Ariella is always the aggressor and Gloria is just the truth teller trying to remove herself from the fight. This draft felt much closer to presentable, even though it definitely still had problems.

The workshop with Matthew Reeder as director and our amazing group of actors was invaluable to the development of this play. Matt is a professional director and faculty member in the Department of Theatre and Dance, and his expertise showed in the room. He connected the puzzle pieces of my play in a brilliant way and helped me figure out how to raise the stakes and make this play what I really want it to be. On the first day of the workshop, we read through the play in its entirety and spent another couple of hours talking about the play. The biggest problem we uncovered on that first day was that Gabriella and Mrs. Andrews were serving as plot devices and their storylines were frankly boring. Matt suggesting moving back the revelation about Mrs. Andrews kicking Gabriella out of the apartment to the climax of the play. This pretty much immediately set off a lightbulb in my head. Of course, that information shouldn't come out until later!

That night I went home and completely rewrote the storyline for Gabriella and Mrs. Andrews, keeping only one of their original scenes and scrapping the rest. I didn't sleep until two in the morning, but it was worth it to hear the new script read the next evening. Finally, I wasn't bored to death by Gabriella and Mrs. Andrews. They felt like real people dealing with their own problems that happened to take Mrs. Andrews into her past. They were no longer just a plot device.

The next three days of the workshop were spent finessing Mrs. Andrews journey through the play, and clarifying her motivations, as well as raising the stakes for the girls in the house in

1949. Matt talked about how difficult it would have been for these girls to make ends meet, especially as single women with no familial connections. Their situations were literally life or death to a degree. Going through the play and making sure those stakes were reflected in the text was extremely helpful for me as a writer. I took copious notes each day on little things to be tweaked and changes (see Appendix F). By the time we got to the day of the public reading, I felt really good the state of my play. A play is never finished without a full production, so this is certainly not the end of the line for this play, but I'm very happy with where it's ended up for now. The actors did an amazing job bringing it all to life, including their dedication to learning the many accents spattered through the play. The final draft can be found in Appendix G.

The public reading took place on Saturday, April 20th. The crowd was small because there were several other events happening in the theatre department on that night, but a small crowd was just right for this performance. The cast did an amazing job, and the audience reacted with laughs, gasps, and everything else I could hope for. As a playwright, there is something very different about watching your play as part of an audience. You hear it in a new way for the first time and seeing this reading as an audience member I took notes on additional changes I know I will want to make in the future.

After the reading I asked for feedback from my small audience, asking them specifically what they thought about Mrs. Andrews. Why was she? Why did she do the things she did? The audience definitely picked up on my intentions, but they wanted to know more about her. She is definitely a character I will work on expanding in the next draft of this play, along with the character of Gabriella. The notes I took on the public reading and on the post-reading feedback can be found in Appendix H.

As a whole, this experience has been incredible. Every time I write a new play I am both unbearably frustrated and reminded that this is exactly what I went to spend my time being frustrated by. Writing a historical fiction play with seven characters and taking place in two time periods was something I have never done before, and it was certainly a new challenge. Managing that many characters made it difficult to clarify a clear protagonist, but in the end, I discovered Bridget McCarthy, later Bridget Andrews, to be my protagonist. The main conflict lies between Ariella and Margot, and the time periods are thematically connected, but Bridget is really the center of the story, and it is her story to tell, concluding in the end that once again everyone has left her, but this time it's her own fault. She could have prevented Gabriella's departure, but she didn't, and now she has to live with that.

Through this process as a playwright I have learned that I am good at writing character and dialogue, but I sometimes forget about the plot. This is not a new struggle for me, and I definitely think I have improved upon that weakness, but it's something that I will have to continue to fight against as I continue my writing career. I get so caught up in the characters that I love so much, that I forget they need to be doing something that drives us through the entire play from beginning to end. I especially lost this with Mrs. Andrews and Gabriella in the earlier drafts. Now their storyline is heading in the right direction. Another strength I have as a playwright is that I write very quickly, and I have no problem cutting scenes or killing off plotlines to make my play better. Because I can write quickly I don't get attached to things I have already written. The weakness on the flip side of this is that I don't often set enough time aside for the discovery and research process. I want to jump straight to the writing, and that can cause problems, especially when writing a historical play like this one.

I cannot wait to continue building my body of work after leaving Ball State. This is certainly not the end of the writing road for me, and I plan to use everything I've learned from this process to make my writing better and better with every new project I work on. I love what I do with all my heart, and I am willing to put in every ounce of work to make this work for me as a career.

Appendix A

Discovery Packet

Questions/Thoughts/Ideas

What about an immigrant family living in this house in 2000 in Brooklyn (Grandmother, mother, daughter? Maybe Dad?) and the grandmother is also one of the girls who lived there in the 1950s but you don't know that until the very end.

Include a girl who was born in America in the house - houses the modern arguments against immigration.

How does this play integrate with modern immigrants --- switching back and forth from modern day to the 50s?

Ensemble piece

The landlady is broke or retired and therefore she has to sell the house.

What is the end of this era? When does this start and when does this stop? The boarding house opens in the 1930s and stays open until 1949. This is the year it closes.

Look historically about what happened to them (the women who owned these houses)

What question is the play asking? The play is asking a few questions I think:

- What does it do to a person to not have a place to call home?
- Are we a reflection of our country/our ancestors? (this question is asked with Margot and Ariella)

Food as a representation of culture? Maybe they have food from a different girls culture on specific days of the week? Wednesdays are African American, Thursdays are German, Fridays are Irish, Saturdays are Jewish?

Time: 1949 and 2017 (September)

Location: Brooklyn

Maps

Brooklyn:

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Map/US/70676/Page+018+++Brooklyn+++Map+No++10/>

Podcasts:

- Podcivility: DACA (September 7, 2017)

1949

- Once upon a time there were four girls living together in one house in Brooklyn with their landlady.
- Everyday they would get up, get dressed, to go work, come home, study, and go to bed.
- Until one day an eviction notice arrives at the door (for their landlady)
- Because of that the girls learn that their landlady is broke and has been undercharging them
- Because of that the girls feel partially responsible for the situation
- Because of that (and because of the fact that this is their home) they come up with a plan to help
- BUT one of them doesn't want to help. (antagonist. Very Puppy a la Tall Girls)

German life:

- 1945 – WWII ended
- After the war, West and East Berlin were divided. The British and Americans controlled West Berlin while the Soviets controlled East Berlin.
- East Berliners fled.
- 1948 – Berlin Airlift
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/03/the-forgotten-story-of-when-the-germans-were-the-refugees/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.7db5b129423b
- The Russians took over East Berlin. German women were frequently raped by Russian soldiers.
- After the war, many ex-Nazi soldiers committed suicide
- During the war young Arian women were sometimes take as “breeders” and their daughters were set to become breeders as well when they turned 18.
- Kinder, Küche, and Kirche (children, cooking, and church)
- Females of the BDM (Bund Deutscher Mädel, League of German Girls) Generation (those born c. 1920-1933) were essentially the hardest hit by changes in attitudes, as girls' education focused mainly on literacy and numerical skills, instead of on more intellectual subjects.
 - <http://historytothepublic.org/third-reich-feminism-girls-education-in-the-nazi-period/>

African American Life

- 1947 - Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in major league baseball on April 15 signaling a historic step forward in the movement to end segregation.
- In the 1940s in big cities, the black community was extremely segregated (in NYC the black “Ghettos” were in Harlem)
- The great migration was the relocation of more than 6 million African Americans from the rural South to cities of the North, Midwest, and West fro, about 1916 – 1970
- Maybe this character left because she couldn't get a good education. Virginia and South Carolina high schools were legally segregated.
- “scores” of girls and teenage women migrated to the north but their stories are often passed over.
- “older teenage girls shouldered the responsibility of supporting families at the expense of their education” (time.com/3857576/girls-great-migration)
- A girl from Port Arthur texas wrote to the Chicago Defender

- Dear Sir: I am a reader of the Chicago Defender I think it is one of the Most Wonderful Papers of our race printed. Sirs I am writing to see if You all will please get me a job. And Sire I can wash dishes, wash iron nursing work in groceries and dry good stores. Just any of these I can do. Sire, who so ever you get the job from please tell them to send me a ticket and I will pay them. When I get their as I have not got enough money to pay my way. I am a girl of 17 years old and in the 8 grade at Knox Academy School. But on account of not having money enough I had to stop school. Sire I will thank you all with all my heart. May God Bless you all.
- A mother wrote
 - “Gentlemen: I want to get in tuch with you in regard of good location & a job I am for race elevation every way. I want a job in a small town some where in north where I can receive very good wages and where I can educate my 3 little girls and demand respect of intelegence.”
- Isabel Wilkerson’s Great Migration story is becoming a TV show “The Warmth of Other Suns”
- Jobs:
 - Domestic work
 - Commercial laundry

Irish Life

- The 1950s in Ireland were known as the decade of ‘doom and gloom’ the ‘worst decade since the famine’ and the ‘lost decade’. (<https://www.ucc.ie/en/émigré/history/>)
- The small farm rural economy (agriculture), the largest Irish economy, experienced a serious decline in the 1950s.
 - 2/5 of the country’s economy was agriculture
 - West Ireland was the most rural and therefore struggled the most
- Little work was available to the thousands of young people coming of age.
- The unemployment rate was highest between 1949 and 1956
- In the 1950s, approximately half a million people left the Irish Republic.
- Roughly 3 out of every five children who grew up in 1950s Ireland left the country at some stage
- For many young women it was very hard to be separated from their families and many planned to go back.
- In one story the children in an Irish family had one pair of shoes that they shared between the two of them.
- ‘Breaking the Silence’ interviews carried out by UCC’s ICMS (see emigrants’ voices)
- Charlestown, Co. Mayo (a possible hometown for Bridget)
- Young Irish women were very innocent and desexualized (VERY Catholic)
- The female body was framed as “dangerous”
- Young women knew “who to avoid” and how to ‘stand firm’ while remaining ignorant/innocent of matters of sex and sexuality.
- When Mary, an Irish emigrant, began to switch her point of view away from this asexual take on women, she changed her mind set to view her body as something that needed to be protected from all the ‘fellas’ who would surely take advantage of her.

- Speech
 - “the likes of that”
 - “I can tell you” at the end of a sentence
 - “I suppose” at the end of a sentence
 - “you know” at the end of a sentence
 - “I was never told the facts of life”
 - “the fellas”
 - “mum and dad”
 - “it is hateful” = it is horrible
 - “things went sour”
- Potential jobs
 - Blue Cross health insurance company
- Quote from Mary, an Irish emigrant herself “Emigration showed both of us [she and her husband] what we were capable of and it proved that we were capable of anything”
- Folk song
 - The Leaving of Liverpool: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EIIVX5NDs4I>
 -

Jewish American Life

- New York Jewish accent
 - Influenced by Yiddish
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GreQwhYTzoY>
- <https://macaulay.cuny.edu/eportfolios/napoli13/brooklyn-jews/>
 - Jews immigrated to the United States in three waves
 - Sephardic Jews (1)
 - German Jews (1800-1880)
 - Eastern European Jews (1880-1920)
 - This wave of immigrants consisted mostly of Jews forced to flee Poland and Russia. The largest wave was Russian Jews to New York City in the 1880s and the 1900s. By 1914 the Jewish population in New York City exceeded 1.5 million. Many Jewish families established successful businesses in the textile industry. New York City became the American capital of Judaism. Starting in the 1870s, at the same time the Jim Crow Laws were passed, Anti-Semitism in New York City skyrocketed. The police force claimed that 50% of all crimes were committed by Jews. The Jewish population spread out in the 1920s and 30s leaving room for Jewish life and culture to grow in New York City. It was also during this time that a large chunk of the Jewish population moved to Brooklyn and other surrounding burrows.

Brooklyn in the 1940s

- <http://www.1940snewyork.com>
- They live in the Bushwick neighborhood in Brooklyn with rent less than \$30 a month.

- Wages
 - Prior to 1960, state minimum wage rates varied from industry to industry.
 - <https://libraryguides.missouri.edu/pricesandwages/1940-1949>
 - <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435051428019;view=1up;seq=163>
 - Typists
 - There was a shortage of typists starting in 1948. Typist positions usually required a high school degree but because of the shortage Gloria might have gotten a typist job.
 - Might have earned \$30 a week
 - Store Clerk
 - 90 cents an hour

Speech

- Late 1940s slang
 - Take a powder – to leave
 - Fuddy-Duddy – old-fashioned person
 - Gobbledygook – double talk, long speech
 - Fat-head – stupid or foolish person
 - Chrome-dome – a bald headed man
 - Eager beaver – enthusiastic helper
 - Armored heifer – canned milk
 - In cahoots with – conspiring with
 - Snap your cap – get angry
 - Active duty – sexually promiscuous boy
 - Share crop – sexually promiscuous girl
 - Doll dizzy – girl crazy
 - Ducky shincracker – a good dancer
 - Above my pay grade – don't ask me
 - Cook with gas – to do something right
 - Killer-diller – good stuff
 - Hi sugar, are you rationed? – are you going steady?
 - Stompers – shoes
 - Flip your wig – to lose control of yourself
 - Dead hooper – poor dancer
 - Pennies from heaven – easy money
 - Ameche – to telephone
 - Gone with the wind – run off (with the money)
 - Lettuce – money
 - Gas – either a good time or something that was really funny
 - Grandstand – to show off
 - Brainchild – someone's creative idea
 - What's buzzin', cousin? – how's it going?
 - Khaki wacky – boy crazy
 - Hen fruit- eggs
 - Hi-de-ho – hello
 - Pass the buck – pass responsibility for
 - Motorized freckles – insects

- Keen
- Hep - hip
- Spiffy – smart (looking sharp)
- Gam – attractive legs
- Gat – revolver or pistol
- Cat’s pajamas
- Cat’s meow
- Blue nose = prude
- Swyve = a nicer form of fuck
- Moxie - Courage or strong nerves.
- On the beam - On the right track or course; cool.
- Snap your cap - Get angry.

Modern day: September 2017:

DACA

- “DHS set a date of March 5, 2018 for permits to begin expiring. All current permits will be honored until their individual two-year expiration date. To create that window, DHS offered a one-month window for all DACA holders whose permits expired before March 5 to apply for a renewal. But more than 20,000 DACA holders who were eligible for the renewal did not get their permits extended, either by not applying and paying the \$495 fee or for having the application arrive late. Of the 20,000, at least several hundred may have had their [applications lost in the mail](#), a situation DHS is reviewing in order to allow those applicants to reapply.” (<https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/02/politics/daca-explained/index.html>)
- Research on travel Visas
 - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/visa-expiration-date.html>
 - U.S.
 - Department of State regulations require applicants for Student Visas to provide evidence that they have a
 - permanent residence abroad with no immediate intention of abandoning it, and that they intend to return
 - to their residence abroad when they are no longer students. Additionally, in order to apply for a Student
 - Visa, students must have an interview with the U.S. embassy counsel in their home country. Because of
 - these requirements, many undocumented students will find it difficult to obtain a Student Visa.
- The DREAM act
 - <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/dream-act-daca-and-other-policies-designed-protect-dreamers>
- Interview with Viridiana, a DREAMER herself.

Sent to Viridiana – 9/20/18

1. How old were you when you came to the US?
2. Why did your parents move here?

3. Do you remember Obama announcing the start of the DACA program?
 4. Do you remember where you were when you got the news that Trump was phasing out the DACA program?
 - a. What was your initial reaction?
 5. What do people often assume incorrectly about the Dreamer experience?
 6. What do you want people to know about DACA and the Dreamers?
 7. What is your plan for the future now that DACA is ending?
 8. What is your biggest fear going forward?
-
1. My parents brought me to the U.S when I was 2 months old so I honestly didn't even remember anything about Mexico.
 2. My parents moved for the same reason many people have come. They wanted a better life for their kids and they thought this country was the best place to do that.
 3. I honestly don't remember the start of the program. I was probably like 10 at the time. My parents knew about it because I have had it for a while now. It didn't make much of a difference because I wasn't old enough to work back then or drive so the exact use wasn't very obvious to me. Today however, it definitely makes the difference.
 4. I am not huge on keeping up with current events so I didn't know about Trump phasing the program out until I got home and my parents told me. Once they told me I felt scared and worried about my future.
 5. I haven't gotten many assumptions but I've had some think that we are too privileged. The idea of us getting a SSN and getting help from the government when we weren't born here appears privileged to them.
 6. I'd like to let them know that that is exactly what we are - dreamers. We dream of being able to achieve the "American Dream" like everyone else in this country. I want them to know that DACA makes a huge difference. It gives us opportunity and some hope for our futures here in the U.S. It helps us know that we have a shot at the "American Dream".
 7. Well, honestly, I haven't thought that far. I didn't want to because I didn't want to try and imagine my life without it. I still have the majority of my life in front of me so it's going to be a longer road without it with more challenges and humps to get over. I feel like it will consist of a lot of extra work and searching for alternatives. I also fear for those children who will be brought in years to come. They won't have the same opportunities I did, even if it was for a short period of time.
 8. My biggest fear is that things will get too hard for me and I won't be able to do it. I won't have the ability of making my parents sacrifice of bringing us to this country worth while.

Additional questions sent 9/20/18

1. Can you give me a few examples of how the DACA program has helped you? From what I know it allows you to get a drivers license, a job, an get into college programs. Is that correct? Are there other things I'm missing?
2. This is a question more specific to my play: Do you happen to know if a landlord would be able to refuse to rent to you if you didn't have a DACA permit?

Characters

- German girl
 - Her mother sent her to America to escape the Russian soldiers.
 - Her father committed suicide after the war when he was pictures of the concentration camps.

- This girl enters the house in the middle of the play (maybe right before the end of act 1)
- She is very quiet. Doesn't speak much at all throughout
- The other girls all shit on her, because they are taking the Jewish girl's side.
- At some point the German girl explodes from all the mean comments and tells these bitches off, because she was not a Nazi, and the war wasn't easy for her and her mother. (she confesses her father's suicide here too)
- Modern Mexican Woman
 - 24 years old
 - DACA- Dreamer
 - Earning her doctorate in medicine at **State University Of New York Health Science Center At Brooklyn**
 - Training at The Brooklyn Hospital Center
 - <https://www.tbh.org/professional-medical-education/graduate-medical-education/surgery>
 - <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/25/key-facts-about-unauthorized-immigrants-enrolled-in-daca/>

Characters
Date:

Jewish American

NAME: Ariella
AGE: 18

- Has recently moved out of her parents home in Brooklyn
- Wants to be an actress
- Parents want her to marry a nice Jewish boy

VALUES: Freedom, independence, Ambition

GOAL: long term: to become an actress
short term: to be cast in the off-broadway play: "..."
auditions are coming up

OBSTACLE: She has to buy a new dress and memorize her monologue, but she doesn't have any money and she can't memorize on her own.

↳ She sounds Jewish... they want her to -like normal or perhaps she's in a play and she wants to impress a producer who's coming to see the show

↳ maybe the producer wants to take advantage of her

↳ worried about something less cliché

* wants to be seen

Characters

German



NAME: Margot

AGE: 16

- From East Berlin
- Russian soldiers raped her (or her mother?)
- Her father committed suicide when he saw photos of the concentration camps.
- gets a room in the house later than the other girls.
- she's the outsider.
- Arian, and extremely conventionally pretty

VALUES: peace, freedom, stability, happiness, friendship

GOAL: to make a friend → more specific: what does this look like?

OBSTACLE: all the girls think she's a nazi

- wants to learn. Gloria will teach her.
- maybe she helps all the girls w/ their hobbies
- wants to blend in*
- maybe she tries to lose her accent.

Characters

Date:

African American



NASA

NAME: Gloria

AGE: 17

- Brilliant
- wants to be a scientist
- left the south because she couldn't get a good education.
- Applies for a competitive college program over the course of the show

VALUES: intelligence, education, hard work, persistence, respect

GOAL: long term: to work for NASA
short term: to get into a college science program

OBSTACLES: the university doesn't accept African American women into the program.

- uses science to explain things.

↳ what's behind her need to work at NASA

- she wants to make a difference in science b/c you can't argue with science.
- *wants to be seen

characters

Irish



NAME: Bridget

AGE: 15

- oldest sibling
- Irish catholic
- sends packages home rather than buying the things she needs.

VALUES: family, religion

GOAL: she wants provide for her family & have her own life.

OBSTACLE: she doesn't make a lot of money, and now she has to pour money back into the house.
Her family is edging her out

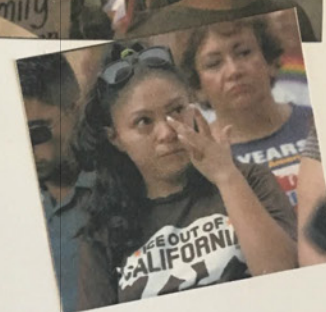
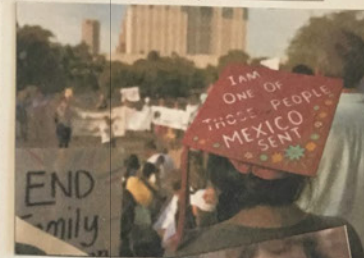
Write a letter from her to her farm

Note: by the end of the play

* wants to blend in

characters

Modern DACA Woman



NAME: Gabriella Sánchez

AGE: 24

ETHNICITY: Mexican (American)

OCCUPATION: getting her doctorate in medicine at State U of NY
training at the Brooklyn Hospital Center

VALUES: Family, freedom, hard work

GOAL: long term: to become a surgeon
short term: to graduate

OBSTACLE: Donald Trump

- pays a little less rent b/c she does something for Miss Andrews.
- give more quins.

Other research:

- Mentos were invented in 1932, but they didn't become popular in the US until the 1960s.
 - o <https://www.candywarehouse.com/mentos-candy/>
- Cherenkov Radiation
 - o Radiation emitted by a massive particle which is moving faster than light in the medium through which it is traveling. No particle can travel faster than light in vacuum, but the speed of light in other media, such as water, glass, etc., are considerably lower. Cherenkov radiation is the electromagnetic analogue of the sonic boom, though Cherenkov radiation is a shockwave set up in the electromagnetic field.
- How to tell stories of immigration
 - o <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2018/12/masha-gessen-wins-2018-hitchhens-prize/577297/>
- How to become a citizen from 1906-1952
 - o "The procedure began with the filing of a declaration of intention, which recorded the applicant's oath to the clerk of the court that it was his or her bona fide intention to become a citizen of the United States, to reside permanently therein, and to renounce all allegiances to other nations. Within a period of 2 to 7 years after filing the declaration, the applicant could petition the court for citizenship, presenting at this time the affidavits of two witnesses with personal knowledge of the applicant, stating that the applicant had resided in the United States for at least 5 years and possessed a good moral character. The petition then became the subject of an investigation and hearing before a judge. Officials of the Bureau conducted preliminary examinations and submitted findings and recommendations to the court. The hearing before a judge was the last step in the procedure, provided the judge found the findings and recommendation of naturalization officials favorable and satisfactory. If so, the applicant would take an oath of allegiance to the U.S. Constitution and laws and renounce all foreign allegiances, and the judge would issue an order of admission to citizenship and grant the applicant a certificate of citizenship. However, a judge could also order a continuance of the investigation or deny the petition, listing the reasons for the denial. A major change in this procedure occurred in 1952, when the filing of the declaration of intention was eliminated."
 - o <https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/federal/naturalization-process-in-u-s-early-history/>

Exploration of characters and dialogue:

Margot and Ariella meet for the first time

ARIELLA

Who's this?

LANDLADY

Your new roommate

I'm supposed to have a single room. ARIELLA
 I'm sorry, I can't afford that anymore. LANDLADY
 I pay extra! ARIELLA
 You pay the going rate. It says so in your lease. LANDLADY

But you promised- ARIELLA
 I didn't promise anything. Margot, put your bags down. LANDLADY

Margot moves to do so.

Don't you dare put your bags down. ARIELLA

Margot stops
 Put them down. It's okay. She's all bark and no bite. LANDLADY

Don't you dare! ARIELLA

Ariella stamps her foot

Entschuldigung MARGOT

Margot sets her bags down. Ariella stops and stares at Margot and then at Landlady.

You must be joking. ARIELLA

She's a very kind girl. I'm sure you'll get along swimmingly LANDLADY

She's German! ARIELLA

How observant of you. LANDLADY

ARIELLA

Earnest now

No. This is unacceptable. I'm not comfortable with these living conditions. I have to switch with one of the other girls.

LANDLADY

You are more than welcome to talk to the other girls, but I won't do any rearranging. I'm not a school teacher.

Landlady walks out, leaving Ariella and Margot alone

ARIELLA

Don't bother unpacking. You won't be in here long.

Margot says nothing. She won't look at Ariella

ARIELLA

You won't even look at me? Am I that inhuman to you?

MARGOT

No!

ARIELLA

She speaks

MARGOT

I'm not an anti-Semite

ARIELLA

Maybe not, but did you do anything to stop your father and brothers from slaughtering us?

Margot says nothing.

ARIELLA

I don't trust you one bit.

Ariella walks out. Leaving Margot alone. Margot closes her suitcase and puts it at the foot of the bed, before curling up on top of the covers.

Notes: Writing this scene I discovered that Ariella's hatred of Margot is really more of a fear, and very justified fear. I want to be careful to stay away from villainizing Ariella. She can say a lot of what seem like very nasty things, but she says it all from a very justified place. I want that to be clear. And then I want her to learn that you can't make generalizations about a group of people that hold true for every one of those people. Margot suffered too.

Gloria and Margot

Gloria, and Margot are in the Gloria and Bridget's room. Gloria is sitting at her desk pouring over a textbook. Margot is sitting on Bridget's bed, staring at the floor.

GLORIA

Do you have to sit in here?

MARGOT

Bridget said I could.

GLORIA

I know Bridget said you could but I never said you could. It's my room too.

MARGOT

May I please stay here?

GLORIA

You have your own room.

MARGOT

Ariella doesn't care for me.

GLORIA

I don't care for you too much neither.

Margot falls silent. Gloria returns to her studying. After a few seconds.

MARGOT

What are you studying?

GLORIA

Physics

MARGOT

What's physics?

GLORIA

You don't know what physics is? But you're white! They teach white people everything!

MARGOT

Not in Berlin

GLORIA

Did you go to school?

MARGOT

Ja

Then what did you study?	GLORIA
Literature and homemaking	MARGOT
You really got the wheeny.	GLORIA
Was?	MARGOT
I don't know what you're sayin' when you start talkin' German	GLORIA
I don't know what you say when you use your American phrases	MARGOT
What's was?	GLORIA
What	MARGOT
Are you askin' or are you tellin'?	GLORIA
Was means what	MARGOT
Okay when I say you really got the wheeny, I mean you got the short straw. You got a raw deal. You got bamboozled. Cheated.	GLORIA
I understand, danke.	MARGOT
Bitter	GLORIA
Bitte	MARGOT
(pronounced 'bitə)	
	GLORIA

Whatever. I gave it a shot.

MARGOT

Thank you

GLORIA

You're welcome. So, you don't know what physics is?

MARGOT

No

GLORIA

It's science. There are several different types of physics. There's classical mechanics, thermodynamics, electromagnetism, relativity, quantum mechanics, nuclear physics, atomic physics-

MARGOT

Like the atom bomb?

GLORIA

Yes exactly

MARGOT

I don't think I like physics.

GLORIA

It ended the war didn't it?

MARGOT

At what cost?

GLORIA

How many people did your country kill?

Margot looks away

Thought so.

Notes: I'm struggling with writing Gloria in a genuine, non-offensive way. I want to be accurate to how she would have talked in the time period, but I feel weird about putting words into a POC's mouth to begin with. I think I'm combatting my fears by making Gloria really smart. I hope it's working. In this scene I discovered I really like the idea of the girls talking about and negotiating language. I also like the idea of Gloria taking Margot on as a student. I think this play can be full of really strong arguments like the one that ends this scene.

Modern day: Gabriella and Land Lady

Gabriella sits in her apartment staring at the TV. U.S. Attorney Jeff Sessions can be heard making his official announcement on the ending of the DACA program from September 5th, 2017.

RECORDING OF JEFF SESSION

...such an open-ended circumvention of immigration laws was an unconstitutional exercise of authority by the executive branch. The effect of this unilateral executive amnesty among other things contributed to a surge of minors at the southern border that yielded terrible humanitarian consequences. It also denied jobs to hundreds of thousands of Americans by allowing those same illegal aliens to take those jobs. We inherited from our founders and have advanced an unsurpassed legal heritage which is a foundation of our freedom, our safety, and our prosperity. As attorney general, it is my duty to ensure that the laws of the united states are enforced and that the constitutional order is upheld...

Land lady knocks on the door. Gabrielle turns down the volume and goes to answer the door.

	GABRIELLE
Hi Mrs. Andrews. How's it going?	
	MRS. ANDREWS
Splendidly. How are things here?	
	GABRIELLE
They've been better.	
	MRS. ANDREWS
You saw the news?	
	GABRIELLE
I was just watching it.	
	MRS. ANDREWS
I'm sorry.	
	GABRIELLE
Thank you.	
	MRS. ANDREWS
May I come in?	
	GABRIELLE
Of course.	

Gabrielle steps back to let her through. Mrs. Andrews is immediately drawn to the TV. Gabrielle quickly walks over and turns it off.

MRS. ANDREWS

When does your permit expire?

GABRIELLE

I'm really not comfortable sharing that information with you.

MRS. ANDREWS

I'm really not comfortable with an illegal immigrant leasing my apartment.

Beat.

GABRIELLE

It doesn't expire for a while, and in the mean time I plan to fight this.

MRS. ANDREWS

I'd love to help any way I can. I'll vote against its abolition of course-

GABRIELLE

You could let me renew my lease.

MRS. ANDREWS

I'm not comfortable with that at this point. I don't want to be forced to break it in the event of the expiration of your permit.

GABRIELLE

You wouldn't have to break it. If anyone finds out, I can just tell them you didn't know.

MRS. ANDREWS

But that would be lying.

GABRIELLE

But for a good reason

MRS. ANDREWS

I'm sorry. I can't be a part of a lie like that. I have to uphold my morals.

GABRIELLE

What about helping people in need? Isn't that part of your morals?

MRS. ANDREWS

I don't have to defend myself to you.

Mrs. Andrews goes to the door.

GABRIELLE

Did you want something?

MRS. ANDREWS

I just wanted to ask you when your permit expired, and express my condolences.

GABRIELLE

Thank you.

MRS. ANDREWS

Again, I'll do anything I can, within the law, to help.

GABRIELLE

Have a great day Mrs. Andrews.

MRS. ANDREWS

The same to you Gabrielle. Take care of yourself.

Mrs. Andrews closes the door.

GABRIELLE

I will.

NOTES: I really like this idea of the landlady being racist but thinking she's not racist. I want her to have very strong morals. She absolutely will not ever break the law, but she doesn't even have a full understanding of what the law is. She reads and watches little news, and when she does it's quite biased. I also really like this idea of Gabrielle feeling like she has to be nice to Mrs. Andrews because Mrs. Andrews have power over her living accommodations.

Bridget and Ariella

Where are they? Ariella's room.

What are they doing? Picking out an outfit for Ariella to go to dinner with this producer.

What does Ariella want? Ariella wants Bridget to tell her she looks beautiful in the green dress.

AND Ariella wants Bridget to agree with her that Margot shouldn't live with her.

What does Bridget want? Bridget wants Ariella to lend her a dress. AND Bridget wants Ariella to play nice with Margot, by asking Margot what she should wear to dinner.

Bridget and Ariella are in Ariella's room. Ariella is sorting through her closet and pulling out a few dresses.

ARIELLA

I don't trust her one bit.

BRIDGET
Have you talked to her at all?

ARIELLA
Sure I've talked to her.

Ariella holds up three dresses.

Which one do you think?

BRIDGET
Hold them up one at a time.

Ariella holds up a red dress

ARIELLA
A little too sexy maybe?

BRIDGET
I suppose

Ariella holds up the blue dress

ARIELLA
Too frilly?

BRIDGET
I don't think so.

ARIELLA
You have to see it on.

Ariella puts on the dress

BRIDGET
What do you talk to Margot about?

ARIELLA
I thought we were done with this.

BRIDGET
I don't believe you talk to her.

ARIELLA
I've talked to her.

BRIDGET
About what?

ARIELLA
About how I don't trust her one bit.

BRIDGET
Sure, you talked to her.

ARIELLA
What do you mean by that?

BRIDGET
Oh, nothing

ARIELLA
No, tell me.

BRIDGET
A conversation that likes of that isn't a conversation at all I'd say. It's like you're just a radio and she's listening to you. Even if she said something you wouldn't have heard her, I can tell you.

ARIELLA
And why should I listen to her?

Ariella has the dress on

Zip me up.

Bridget obliges

BRIDGET
Because she might have something worth saying.

ARIELLA
What do you think?

BRIDGET
I think it's lovely. And I think you should talk to her.

ARIELLA
It's too frilly. Have *you* talked to her?

Ariella takes off the blue dress with Bridget's help.

BRIDGET

Yes

ARIELLA

Has she said anything worth saying?

BRIDGET

She hasn't said anything hateful, I can tell you.

ARIELLA

To you she hasn't.

BRIDGET

And she hasn't said anything hateful to you either.

ARIELLA

Well no... not yet.

BRIDGET

Give her a chance. She seems sad.

ARIELLA

She deserves to be sad.

BRIDGET

As far as we know she didn't hurt anybody.

ARIELLA

As far as we know she didn't save anybody either.

Ariella holds up the green dress.

Do we have a winner?

BRIDGET

Why don't you ask Margot?

ARIELLA

You must be joking.

BRIDGET

You don't even like my taste in clothes!

ARIELLA

I respect your taste, but I also know I hate the blue dress.

BRIDGET

Well if you're never going to wear it why do you keep it?

ARIELLA

Because I only have three nice dresses! I might need it to audition for the role of little bo-peep someday.

BRIDGET

But someone else could get more use out of it.

ARIELLA

Bridge, if you want to borrow it just ask.

BRIDGET

I wasn't fishing for a handout.

ARIELLA

I'm not giving you a handout, I'm just saying you can borrow it.

BRIDGET

Right. Okay, thank you.

ARIELLA

So the green dress wins?

BRIDGET

I told you, ask Margot.

ARIELLA

I'm wearing the green dress.

Notes: Before writing this scene I decided exactly what both these characters wanted, and I gave them multiple goals as well. I think planning this out ahead of time really helped me create an active scene, with something happening on a physical, immediate level, but also something happening on a larger scale within the context of the play. I think this is something I need to work on more as a writer in general.

POSSIBLE TITLES:

- The Brooklyn Girls
- The Bushwick Girls

Appendix B

Initial Outline

Key: 2017, 1949

Ariella's story line

Gloria's story line

Bridget's story line

Margot's story line

Ms. Winslow's story line

Garbiella's story line

Ms. Andrew's story line

Scene 1: Exposition and Inciting incident.

• 2017.

- Location: the apartment
- Time of day: Evening, 6pm?
- Ms. Andrews & Gabriella
 - Ms. Andrews wants:
 - Her cat back from Gabriella
 - To know when Gabriella plans to move out
 - Gabriella wants:
 - A day off from cat sitting because of an upcoming test
 - To renew her lease
- Inciting incident: Ms. Andrews mentions the end of DACA.
- Gabriella tells Ms. Andrews she's not planning on leaving.
- Ms. Andrews is shocked. She pries into Gabriella's future plans
- Gabriella tells Ms. Andrews she's focused on graduating and nothing else. One thing at a time.
- WHAT TAKES US TO THE PAST?
 - Discussion of immigrants living in the house. Maybe Ms. Andrew says, "I'm sorry, I can't have an illegal immigrant living in this house." Maybe Gabriella says something stupid like "this house wants me here" or "the house doesn't mind" or something else... nothing I just wrote quite works. I'm just letting ideas out onto paper.

• 1949

- Location: Kitchen
- Time of day: Evening, 6pm?
- Bridget, Gloria, Ariella & Ms. Winslow
 - Bridget wants:
 - To make dinner. Gloria and Ariella are getting in her way, both with their need for help in studying and rehearsing, and also because they keep requesting food/spices from their own cultures.
 - Gloria wants:
 - To study. Bridget is setting the table and moving her study materials. Ariella keeps talking over her, reciting lines.

- Ariella wants:
 - To rehearse for A Streetcar Named Desire. (She has to be her very best at this next preview performance because this producer she wants to impress will be there. Trying not to sound too Jewish. The producer is one of the producers of the show.)
 - To have Bridget and Gloria's full attention. Neither Bridget nor Gloria are giving her their full attention.
- Inciting incident: the eviction notice arrives
- Action:
 - They live in making dinner (Bridget doesn't set a place for herself at the table), studying, and rehearsing for a minute before...
 - The eviction notice arrives (with the mail which Gloria runs to check. She's waiting for an acceptance letter)
 - The girls try to figure out how this could have happened. Have they all been paying rent on time and in full? Yes, they have.
 - Ms. Winslow enters.
 - The girls ask Ms. Winslow for an explanation.
 - She tells them she's been undercharging them.
 - The girls try to figure out a solution. What will they do next?
 - Ms. Winslow says it's her responsibility. She'll figure something out. (she doesn't seem like she actually will).
 - Ms. Winslow exits.
 - The girls devise a plan to save the house.
- What is different in the world at the end of scene 1?
 - 2017: Gabriella has to come up with a plan for when her DACA permit expires. What will she do next? She too has a fire under her ass to find a solution.
 - 1949: The girls now know that they're living situation is not stable. They have a fire under their ass to find a solution.

Scene 2: Rising Action

- 2017: Gabriella alone
 - Location: Gabrielle's room
 - Time of day:
 - Gabriella comes home with her backpack and puts a stack of books on her desk. She begins to study.
- 1949:
 - Location: Bridget and Gloria's room -> the hallway/outside Ms. Winslow's door. (Ariella is in her room, running lines, doing her nails, etc.)
 - Time of day:
 - Bridget wants...
 - To convince the rest of the household to take Margot as a tenant.
 - Gloria wants...
 - To check the mail
 - Ms Winslow wants...
 - The girls to find another place to live.

- Inciting incident: Bridget and Gloria come home about at the same time. Bridget tells Gloria that she found a possible tenant (a girl she works with at the department store)
- Gloria checks the mail.
 - Gloria receives a rejection letter.
 - Gloria admits that she hasn't sent out the application to the school of her dreams, because she's too scared.
 - Bridget gives Gloria a pep talk.
- Bridget and Gloria tell Ms. Winslow they have a tenant.
- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?
 - The 1949 girls have hope
 - Gloria has a little less help, but Bridget restores some hope to her.
 - Gabriella has hope

Scene 3: Complication: Margot's arrival

- 2017: Gabriella and Ms. Andrews
 - Location: Gabriella's apartment.
 - Time of day:
 - Ms. Andrews arrives, bringing Gabriella a gift of coffee, so she can use the caffeine to focus on her test.
- 1949:
 - Location: Ariella's room
 - Time of day: Night. 9pm.
 - Ariella, Margot, and Ms. Winslow
 - Ariella wants:
 - Margot to move out.
 - Margot wants:
 - To change out of her traveling clothes and climb into bed and go to sleep.
 - Ms. Winslow wants:
 - The girls to be grateful she's letting them stay at all, and for them to shut up and go to bed.
 - Inciting Incident: Margot speaks (revealing her accent)
 - Action
 - Ariella is reading a script in bed. She has curlers in her hair.
 - Ms. Winslow knocks on the door and announces the arrival of a new tenant.
 - Margot enters.
 - Ariella welcomes her.
 - Margot speaks.
 - Ariella violently changes her mind, and rejects Margot.
 - Ms. Winslow reveals that it was not she who found a new tenant. It was Bridget. She tells Ariella to take it up with her.

- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?

Scene 4: Rising Action

- 2017:
 - Location:
 - Time of day:
 -
- 1949:
 - Location: Gloria and Bridget's room
 - Time of day:
 - Ariella, Gloria, and Bridget are all in the room. Gloria is trying to study and Ariella is trying to convince Bridget and Gloria and Margot has to go.
 - Gloria can't focus so she takes her things and goes into Margot and Ariella's room.
 - Ariella tells Bridget that she has a dinner to go to with the producer she was so hoping to impress, and Margot has made her so flustered.
 - Insert "help me pick my dress" scene.
 - Bridget gets sick because she's not eating enough
 - Location: Margot and Ariella's room.
 - Margot is sitting alone on the bed, reading a letter from her mother.
 - Gloria arrives and tells Margot she's got to make an effort with Ariella.
 - "Sometimes you gotta be nice to the people who hate you just to show them they hate you for no good reason."
 - Margot wants Gloria to be her friend
 - Margot confides in Gloria. She misses her mom. She misses Berlin, Berlin before the war. She feels like her life has no purpose.
 - Gloria wants to find out if Margot really is a Nazi.
 - Gloria interrogates Margot
- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?

Scene 5: Complication

- 2017:
 - Location:
 - Time of day:
 -
- 1949:
 - Location: The kitchen.
 - Time of day: Morning.
 - Ariella has been groped or propositioned by this producer, and now she's asking the girls for advice on what to do about it.
 - Bridget receives a letter from her family asking for more money.
 - Gloria confronts Bridget about her health and tells her she needs to start taking care of herself first.
 - Ariella comes down to the kitchen for breakfast and because she wants to talk to Bridget about last night (dinner with the producer). Gloria is in the kitchen

making breakfast with Margot. This surprises Ariella. Ariella asks Gloria where Bridget is. Gloria says she's still asleep. She isn't feeling well. Ariella starts to go upstairs to talk to her. Gloria stops her, telling her they need let Bridget sleep. Ariella insists she needs to talk to Bridget. Gloria offers her own ears instead. Ariella is reluctant to open up because Margot is there. Somehow (how?) Gloria and Margot convince her to talk. Ariella tells them the producer propositioned her last night. He offered to help her get cast in a Broadway show if she sleeps with him. Gloria tells her to go after what she wants. Ariella is unsure if she should sacrifice her body (and her mind and her human rights) just to get on Broadway. They grapple with the reward vs. cost of the situation. Margot advocates for the "it's not worth it" side. At some point in here the mail arrives and Gloria goes through it looking for her acceptance letter from Cornell. It is there, but with it she finds a letter from Bridget's family. She takes it upstairs to Bridget because she knows Bridget would want to see it. Bridget does not look well. She is very weak. Bridget is very excited to have a letter from her family, so excited that she tries to get out of bed, but she falls back onto the bed, having almost fainted. Gloria is very concerned about Bridget's health. Bridget reads the letter and is gutted to find out that they only wrote to ask for more money. She tells Gloria. Maybe she cries. She tries to figure out how she can send more. Gloria verbally slaps her and tells her to wake the fuck up (not in so many words). She needs to start taking care of herself first, before sending money to her ungrateful family. She needs to think about her future outside of her family back in Ireland. Gloria leaves her to mull things over. Before going back downstairs Gloria opens the letter from Cornell. Margot runs into her on the stairs. Gloria confides in her that she got in. Margot asks her what she's going to do. Gloria doesn't know.

- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?
 - Bridget is conflicted about what to do with her family.
 - Ariella and Margot have a tiny bit more trust between them.
 - Gloria has taken on a larger motherly role in the house (in Bridget's absence), but now she has to make a decision: will she stay or will she go? (cue Should I Stay or Should I Go by The Clash (not really))

Scene 6: Rising Action

- 2017:
 - Time of day:
 - Gabriella submits her paper. (Can we hear the paper out loud? Maybe she reads it to Miss Andrews. Maybe Miss Andrews talks about her Grandmother (Bridget)). Gabriella now has time to think about the end of DACA and what she will do.
- 1949:
 - Location: Kitchen
 - Time of day:
 - Bridget stops sending money to the family so that she can put more money into the house.
 - Ariella has been going to this guys house and flirting with him for a few weeks. She has gotten the part? Maybe she comes home from rehearsal? She realizes the

sexual advances of this wart guy are not worth it. She can't do this like she thought she could.

- - How can the future haunt the past “50 years from now everything will be great” and things are obviously not great.
- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?
 - Margot and Ariella are kind of friends

Scene 7: Crisis/Climax

- 2017:
 - Time of day:
 - Gabriella is packing up the apartment.
- 1949:
 - Location: Kitchen
 - Time of day: Early morning
 - Bridget is making breakfast in the kitchen.
 - Inciting Incident: Gloria enters the kitchen with her bags.
 - Bridget wants
 - Gloria to stay
 - Gloria wants
 - A goodbye hug from Bridget and a promise to write.
 - Bridget is making breakfast in the kitchen, when Gloria enters with her bags fully packed. Bridget tries to find out where Gloria is going. Gloria tells her that she got into Cornell and she's leaving for Ithaca on the 9:00am bus. Bridget feels betrayed that Gloria didn't tell her sooner. Gloria didn't tell her because she didn't want to say goodbye. Gloria tries to justify, telling her it's only a six hour bus ride away. Bridget is not having it. She tries everything she can think of to get Gloria to stay. Margot and Ariella hear the racket and enter. Bridget tells them Gloria is leaving. Gloria wanted to avoid all this drama, but now she has to face it. A great big argument ensues by the end of which Gloria has left.
- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?

Scene 8: Resolution & Dénouement

- 2017:
 - Location: The whole house: empty
 - Time of day:
 - Mrs. Andrews enters and discovers Gabriella gone.
- 1949:
 - Location: The whole house empty:
 - Time of day:
 - Bridget enters and discovers everyone gone
- What is different in the world at the end of this scene?

Breakdown of individual story lines:

Ariella's story line

- Ariella is in a play, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and she is working really hard to impress a specific producer that will be coming to the preview performance.
 - She does this by rehearsing lines with the girls
 - Trying not to sound too Jewish
- Ariella does well at the preview performance and the producer asks her to dinner
 - Ariella asks Bridget to help her pick a dress
- The producer propositions Ariella
 - Ariella becomes unusually quiet. She stops rehearsing with the girls.
- Ariella begins spending time with the producer and in exchange she is cast in his show.
 - One of the girls eventually asks her about it and she tells all.
 - The girl she's talking to tells her she doesn't need this one producer to make it. She can make it without him. She should NOT allow him to treat her that way.
- Ariella tells the producer she's finished.
- Ariella is fired from the play she's in.

Gloria's story line

- Gloria is in her final year of high school, and she has sent out a number of applications to various university science programs. She is studying for her final exams of high school. She works as a typist on the side to make money.
- Gloria admits that she hasn't sent out the application to the school of her dreams, because she's too scared.
- Gloria receives her first rejection letter.
- Gloria studies even harder.
- Someone convinces Gloria to mail the application.
- Gloria is accepted to the school of her dreams.
- Gloria decides to go, leaving the girls and the house behind.

Bridget's story line

- Bridget cooks for the house, works at a department store, and sends money back to her family.
- Bridget gets sick because she's not eating enough
 - Gloria gives her some of her food to nurse her back to health.
- Bridget receives a letter from her family asking for more money.
- Gloria tells Bridget she needs to put her own health and wellbeing first.
- Bridget stops sending money to the family so that she can put more money into the house.

Margot's story line

- Margot arrives in Brooklyn with one suitcase and the money her mother gave her.
- Margot gets one at the department store with Bridget.
- Margot moves into the house.
- Margot tries to befriend all the girls
 - She listens to them
 - She bakes for them
 - She studies with Gloria
- Margot opens up to the girls and tells them her story. This is how she finally wins their friendship

- After this Ariella asks her for advice on what to wear
- How does Gloria show her friendship?
- How does Bridget show her friendship?

Ms. Winslow's story line

- Ms. Winslow is losing money by being a landlady for this house.
- The eviction notice arrives and she's ready to cut her losses and move on.
- She tries to get the girls to move out, but she cares about them so she won't force them out.
 - She tries to find the girls another place to live.
- When Gloria moves out Ms. Winslow sells the house and goes to live with her daughter.

Garbiella's story line

- Gabriella's DACA permit is expiring but she is ignoring the future beyond DACA
- Gabriella is solely focused on graduating
- When she successfully graduates she is forced to look at the future.
- Gabriella packs up and leaves.

Ms. Andrew's story line

- Ms. Andrews assumes that Gabriella will leave the country when her permit expires.
- Ms. Andrews asks Gabriella when her permit expires so that she knows when to start advertising the apartment as for rent.
- Ms. Andrews learns that Gabriella isn't planning to move out.
- This changes Ms. Andrew's view of Gabriella because she thought of her as a "good" law abiding person like herself.
- Ms. Andrews tries to help Gabriella as much as she can within the law
 - She brings her coffee
 - She brings her citizenship applications
- Ms. Andrews stands by her belief that the law is always right, and she must follow it. She makes it clear that when Gabriella's permit expires she will have to leave.
- When Gabriella leaves it hits Ms. Andrews that she is losing her friend.

The Bushwick Girls (working title)

Historical Fiction

by
Emma Rund

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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	ETHNICITY
Gabriella Sánchez	Gabriella is a Dreamer. She is also a graduate student studying to be a doctor. Perhaps prenatal doctor, or something else related to women.	24	Mexican
Laura Andrews	Gabriella's landlady in 2017. Cat lady. She believes fiercely that the law is meant to be followed always.	40	Irish American
Gloria Moore	A brilliant young woman studying very hard to become a scientist for NASA. She moved to Brooklyn for a better high school education.	17	African American
Bridget McCarthy	The oldest of a large Catholic family. She values her religion and her family. She moved to Brooklyn to provide for them. The mom of the house.	15	Irish
Ariella Feldstein	A young actress who has recently moved out of her parents house. She values freedom, independence and ambition.	18	Jewish American
Margot Kühn	The new girl. Shy. She is trying to process the horrors of the last few years. She just wants some peace and a few friends.	16	German
Clara Winslow	The landlady in 1949. She is ready to move on to a simpler life.	60	Mayflower White

SCENE ONE.

Lights up on a second floor studio apartment in a converted Bushwick, Brooklyn townhouse. The house is old. The faded yellow walls are broken up by large cracks. One end of the room fits a mini fridge, a tiny stove, and a sink. The apartment is furnished with mismatched second hand pieces including a prominent desk and two twin beds pushed together, but it is neat and clean.

The room's tenant, GABRIELLA SÁNCHEZ, is in her tiny kitchen, pouring today's 3rd cup of coffee into her cup. She is listening to a podcast.

PODCASTER

Immigration is a really complex issue. Before we can talk about DACA we have to talk about the complexities of illegal immigration. The children that were brought here illegally by their parents-

A knock at the door. Gabriella goes to answer it, turning off her podcast as she goes.

PODCASTER

-are not guilty of committing a crime. The question is, how can we help these people who were brought into-

Gabriella answers the door. MISS ANDREWS stands on the other side.

MISS ANDREWS

Do I smell coffee?

Gabrielle ushers her in.

GABRIELLA

Would you like a cup?

MISS ANDREWS

Is it decaf? If I have caffeine after five p.m. I'll be up all night.

Gabriella starts looking around the room. She checks under her desk.

GABRIELLA

No, sorry. I don't drink decaf

MISS ANDREWS

Wooh! I don't know how you do it.

GABRIELLA

It's the only thing that keeps me going.

MISS ANDREWS

You work too hard.

Gabrielle looks under her bed and finds Tigger, Ms. Andrew's cat, hiding underneath.

GABRIELLA

There he is.

She pulls Tigger out.

MISS ANDREWS

I hope Tigger wasn't any trouble.

GABRIELLA

Oh no, he's been great. Nice and quiet.

Gabriella hands him to Miss Andrews. This is usually when Miss Andrews would leave, but she doesn't.

GABRIELLA

Oh, while you're here, I was wondering if I could get a day off watching Tigger next Wednesday? I have a big paper due and I wanted to spend the day at the library.

MISS ANDREWS

Certainly! I can have someone else keep an eye on him.

GABRIELLA

Thanks.

Miss Andrews still doesn't turn to go.

MISS ANDREWS

What's the paper on?

GABRIELLA

It's for my women and gender studies class.

MISS ANDREWS

Interesting!

GABRIELLA

Yeah I guess.

Miss Andrews *still* doesn't leave.

GABRIELLA

You sure you don't want a cup of coffee?

MISS ANDREWS

Oh, what they hey. Sure I'll have one.

Miss Andrews goes to sit, perhaps on the edge of the bed.
Garbiella pours her a cup of coffee.

MISS ANDREWS

So a women and gender studies class?

GABRIELLA

Yeah

MISS ANDREWS

What's that like?

GABRIELLA

History basically.

Gabriella hands her the cup. Miss Andrews blows on it,
but doesn't drink any.

MISS ANDREWS

You don't like it?

GABRIELLA

Not my favorite. I mean, it's wonderful to learn about women, but history has never been
my best subject.

MISS ANDREWS

If you ever need any help, I did pretty well in my history courses.

GABRIELLA

Thanks.

MISS ANDREWS

(Abruptly)

You're a Dreamer aren't you?

GABRIELLA

Um, yes?

MISS ANDREWS

This is a bit awkward, but I've been thinking about the future of the apartment, and I really can't afford to have it sitting vacant at all. Do you know when you'll be moving out?

GABRIELLA

Moving out?

MISS ANDREWS

I don't mean to rush you. Certainly, take all the time you need, I just-

GABRIELLA

Why would I be moving out? We agreed I would be living here until I finished my residency.

MISS ANDREWS

I just assumed that, with your permit expiring, plans had changed.

GABRIELLA

Plans haven't changed.

MISS ANDREWS

But, when your permit expires you'll be in the United States illegally.

GABRIELLA

Hopefully not.

MISS ANDREWS

I'm not sure I follow.

GABRIELLA

(really searching for something to say)
I'm working on... coming up with... a solution.

Miss Andrews is thrilled.

MISS ANDREWS

Applying for citizenship?! That's fantastic! Why didn't you tell me?

GABRIELLA

I haven't applied yet, but I'm thinking about it.

MISS ANDREWS

You should get started! From what I hear it's a long process.

GABRIELLA

I know it's a long process.

MISS ANDREWS

If you need a letter of recommendation or anything of the sort for your application don't hesitate to ask me.

GABRIELLA

Thanks

MISS ANDREWS

So you're not planning on moving out then?

GABRIELLA

No

MISS ANDREWS

What will you do if your citizenship application doesn't go through before your permit expires?

GABRIELLA

I was hoping I could just keep living here.

MISS ANDREWS

I'm sorry Gabriella. I want to do everything I can to help you, but I can't help you break the law.

GABRIELLA

I think I'm allowed to live here if my citizenship is pending.

MISS ANDREWS

I'll have to look into it then. If I can help you I will.

GABRIELLA

Thanks.

MISS ANDREWS

I hate to ask, but, when does your permit expire?

GABRIELLA

I'm not comfortable sharing that information.

MISS ANDREWS

I don't mean to pry, but I do think it's something I should know.

GABRIELLA

I'm trying not to think about all that right now. I'm focused on graduating.

MISS ANDREWS

I really think this is something that needs to be on your radar.

GABRIELLA

I know.

(Beat.)

I need to finish this assignment.

MISS ANDREWS

Right. Of course. Sorry to keep you.

GABRIELLA

That's okay.

Miss Andrews opens the door

MISS ANDREWS

I'll drop Tigger off next Wednesday.

GABRIELLA

Not next Wednesday. I have the paper, remember?

MISS ANDREWS

Oh yes. Two Wednesdays from now then.

GABRIELLA

Great. See you then.

Gabriella closes the door behind her.

GABRIELLA

You've got to be kidding me.

Gabriella kicks the door.

Gabriella pours herself another cup of coffee and sits down at her desk to work. She opens her computer and begins searching google.

GABRIELLA

Okay. Women's history. Ummmm ,women in post-world war II America. Hm 1949.

The house opens up to the past: 1949 to be exact. Lights come up on another second floor bedroom, and an entire downstairs with a full kitchen and dining room. The downstairs is bustling with life.

BRIDGET is standing at the stove stirring a large pot of soup. She has a stack of papers, including the periodic table on one side and a script on the other. She toggles back and forth between study buddy and scene partner.

GLORIA is sitting at the dining room table amid a pile of paper, books, pencils, rulers, and notecards, diligently studying.

ARIELLA is pacing around the space rehearsing lines.

ARIELLA

'What's the matter, honey? Are you lost?'

BRIDGET

(Reading from the script)

'They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off at Elysian Fields!'

ARIELLA

'That's where you are now.'

GLORIA

Bridget, elements. One more time.

BRIDGET

Mn

GLORIA

Manganese

ARIELLA

I said, 'That's where you are now'

BRIDGET

Uh, 'at Elysian Fields?'

ARIELLA

Oh gosh dang Bridge! Say it with some feeling!

BRIDGET

I'm trying to do three things at once.

(to Gloria)

Cd

GLORIA

Cadmium

BRIDGET

'At Elysian Fields?'

ARIELLA

'This here is Elysian Fields.'

BRIDGET

'They mustn't have- understood- what number I wanted.'

(to Gloria)

Sb

ARIELLA

What?

BRIDGET

The last part was for Gloria.

Oh, uh-
ARIELLA

Seaborgium?
GLORIA

No, Antimony
BRIDGET

Now that's just plain stupid.
GLORIA

'What number you lookin' for?'
ARIELLA

What?
GLORIA

That's my line.
ARIELLA

'Six thirty-two'
BRIDGET

'You don't have to look no further'
ARIELLA

Do you have to rehearse that play right now?
GLORIA

Yes I do.
ARIELLA

Bridget gathers up three plates and three sets of silverware and takes them to the table. She tries to find a place to set them down amid Gloria's pile of papers but she's unsuccessful. She returns the stack of plates and silverware to the counter.

We all know you know the lines.
GLORIA

It's not just about knowing the lines.
ARIELLA

GLORIA

Some of us are doing real work.

BRIDGET

(Too tired for this)

Gloria...

ARIELLA

You don't think acting is real work?! I'd like to see you try it!

GLORIA

I don't get what's so hard about standing there and saying words.

ARIELLA

It's not just standing there and saying words! You have to feel things, really feel things as they happen and react like it's happening for the first time every night!

BRIDGET

Pb

GLORIA

Easy. Lead.

(to Ariella)

You're playing a landlady.

ARIELLA

What does that have to do with anything?

BRIDGET

Landlady's having feelings too.

ARIELLA

Thank you!

GLORIA

It's not a hard part.

ARIELLA

I could do a harder part but they won't let me! What I wouldn't give to play Stanley.

Ariella jumps onto the table, knocking Gloria's books.

ARIELLA

‘Stella!’

GLORIA

Hey!

Gloria gathers her books indignantly.

ARIELLA

‘My baby doll’s left me!’

Ariella sobs dramatically and jumps down from the table.

GLORIA

Would you quit that?

Ariella runs to the phone and picks it up, putting it to her ear.

ARIELLA

‘Eunice? I want my baby. Eunice! I’ll keep ringin’ until I talk with my baby!’

She throws the phone down.

BRIDGET

Careful!

ARIELLA

‘Stell-lahhhhhh!’

Ariella falls to her knees in anguish. She lets out a final sob, and then springs back to her feet.

ARIELLA

And scene.

GLORIA

Bravo.

BRIDGET

I wish you wouldn’t make such a mess.

ARIELLA

Oh, I’ll clean it up.

GLORIA

Like hell you will. We all know Bridget will get stuck with it.

ARIELLA

Fine. Fine.

Ariella gathers up the papers and books she displaced, while Bridget finally finds room to set the plates on the table.

GLORIA

I still don't get what's so exciting about saying somebody else's words.

ARIELLA

You're just not creative.

GLORIA

Oh I'm creative. I create experiments and formulas and designs for rockets, you know, useful things.

ARIELLA

You mean you *want* to create experiments and formulas and designs for rockets. You haven't done any yet!

GLORIA

But I will! As soon as I get into a university.

As soon as the table is set Bridget knocks on the door of the only downstairs bedroom (we do not need to see the inside of this room at any point).

BRIDGET

Dinner is ready Ms. Winslow!

Bridget returns to the stove and begins to ladle soup into three bowls.

ARIELLA

What university is going to let a woman design a rocket?

GLORIA

Cornell

A quick knock at the front door and a small pile of mail falls through the letter slot.

ARIELLA

Mail's here!

GLORIA

I've got it !

Gloria runs for the door just ahead of Ariella and picks up the stack of mail, flipping through it quickly.

ARIELLA

Give it here!

GLORIA

What are you so excited for?

ARIELLA

You never know when you'll get offered a Broadway role.

BRIDGET

I don't think it'd come to you in the mail.

ARIELLA

You never know.

Gloria has finished going through the stack. Nothing for her. She passes the stack to Ariella, who also flips through it. She finds one letter for herself and quickly tears it open, dropping the rest of the mail on the table.

BRIDGET

What is it?

ARIELLA

It's from my manager

GLORIA

What's your starring role?

ARIELLA

Oh my God.

BRIDGET

What?

ARIELLA

Mr. Campbell is coming to see the first preview.

GLORIA

Who?

ARIELLA

The producer

BRIDGET

What producer?

ARIELLA

Of Streetcar

GLORIA

Is that big?

ARIELLA

It means I have to be good. He's the one who wanted to cast me.

BRIDGET

You'll be brilliant.

ARIELLA

You're sure I don't sound too Jewish?

GLORIA

What does it matter if you sound Jewish?

ARIELLA

The big producers on Broadway don't want stars that sounds too Jewish.

BRIDGET

You sound American to me.

ARIELLA

Of course I sound American to you, you're Irish.

GLORIA

You sound fine. You sound like you're from Brooklyn.

So I sound Jewish. ARIELLA

No! GLORIA

Is there anything for me? BRIDGET

What? ARIELLA

In the mail? BRIDGET

Oh I don't know ARIELLA

Bridget picks up the mail herself and goes through it. She suddenly stops. Staring at a letter.

Gloria. BRIDGET

Gloria has her nose in a book again and doesn't hear her.

Gloria! BRIDGET

What? GLORIA

Did you see this? BRIDGET

Bridget holds up a letter with a red stamp across it.

What is it? GLORIA

A notice of repossession. BRIDGET

Repossession of what? ARIELLA

BRIDGET
The house

ARIELLA
From who?

BRIDGET
The bank.

GLORIA
Which means we're being evicted.

ARIELLA
But why?

BRIDGET
I don't know

GLORIA
Ms. Winslow must be behind on payments.

ARIELLA
Which one of you hasn't paid your rent?

GLORIA
Don't look at me, I've been paying.

BRIDGET
I've paid.

ARIELLA
You don't think she's stealing it do you?

GLORIA
Our rent?

Ms. Winslow's bedroom door opens and she walks out dressed in a robe and slippers. She moves slowly. The girls fall silent and watch her as she makes her way to the table.

MS. WINSLOW
Thank you for cooking tonight Bridget. It looks splendid.

BRIDGET

Don't mention it.

The girls sit down at the table. Bridget stays standing, still holding the notice.

MS. WINSLOW

Shall we say grace?

The girls bow their heads. Gloria and Bridget join Ms. Winslow in saying

MS. WINSLOW

Bless us oh Lord and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Ariella joins Ms. Winslow in saying

MS. WINSLOW

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, through whose word everything comes into being.

ALL

Amen.

Ms. Winslow picks up her spoon and begins to eat. Neither Ariella nor Gloria touch their bowls. Ms. Winslow notices.

MS. WINSLOW

What's the matter?

Gloria and Ariella look at Bridget

MS. WINSLOW

If you don't care for potato soup you could always volunteer to cook dinner yourselves.

ARIELLA

No, it's not that. The soup is lovely Bridget. Thank you

GLORIA

Yes thank you

The girls both pick up their spoons and tentatively begin to eat.

MS. WINSLOW

Classes going well Gloria?

GLORIA

Yes ma'am.

MS. WINSLOW

Ariella, your show opens soon doesn't it?

ARIELLA

It does ma'am.

MS. WINSLOW

Bridget? Aren't you joining us?

BRIDGET

I'm not hungry.

They eat in silence a moment longer until it becomes unbearable.

MS. WINSLOW

Alright ladies. Out with it.

BRIDGET

This came for you today.

Bridget puts the letter down in front of Ms. Winslow. Ms. Winslow opens it and takes a moment to skim over it.

MS. WINSLOW

I see.

GLORIA

Is it some kind of mistake?

MS. WINSLOW

Hm? Oh no, I expect not.

GLORIA

What?

BRIDGET
What happened?

MS. WINSLOW
No need to concern yourselves.

BRIDGET
We'd like to help if we can.

MS. WINSLOW
I'm afraid that's not possible.

GLORIA
What are you going to do?

MS. WINSLOW
I suppose I'll go live with my sister.

GLORIA
What?

ARIELLA
Ms. Winslow!

BRIDGET
Where will *we* go?

MS. WINSLOW
I'm sure you'll be able to find a place.

GLORIA
You're not even going to try?

MS. WINSLOW
When you get to be my age you'll understand there comes a time when you have to let things go.

ARIELLA
You can't just give it up! I'll never find another room this price!

MS. WINSLOW
Yes, well that's why it's gone under I imagine.

BRIDGET
How do you mean?

MS. WINSLOW

I wanted to make this place a safe home for girls who couldn't afford one.

GLORIA

You undercharged us.

MS. WINSLOW

Yes.

GLORIA

We could all pay a little more, right girls? If it would help save the house?

ARIELLA

I could pinch a dollar or two.

GLORIA

Bridget?

BRIDGET

I... well, I have to send money to my family.

GLORIA

Even a few cents.

BRIDGET

I suppose I could spare a dollar... maybe.

MS. WINSLOW

Really girls. It's not worth it. I'm ready to be done with all this.

GLORIA

But this is my home! I've been here three years! You can't ask me to just give it up.

MS. WINSLOW

It's not your house Gloria. Unless you want to responsibility of keeping it up, I suggest you mind your own business.

The girls fall silent.

ARIELLA

We just want to help.

MS. WINSLOW

That's very kind, but I don't want your help.

Ms. Winslow stands up.

Delicious soup Bridget

MS. WINSLOW

Thank you.

BRIDGET

Ms. Winslow takes leave of the table and returns to her room. As soon as her door clicks shut-

She can't give up the house.

GLORIA

Agreed.

ARIELLA

But what can we do?

BRIDGET

Give me that letter.

GLORIA

Bridget hands the letter to Gloria. Gloria reads over it. Her eyes widen.

What?

BRIDGET

She's two hundred dollars in debt.

GLORIA

Two hundred?!

ARIELLA

Ariella dramatically falls back into her chair.

It's impossible.

ARIELLA

Ariella cut that out.

GLORIA

What?

ARIELLA

GLORIA

Your incessant negativity.

BRIDGET

She's right though. We can't do it.

GLORIA

You're no help at all.

BRIDGET

I'm just being realistic.

GLORIA

Problems are rarely solved by realists.

ARIELLA

Two hundred dollars!

BRIDGET

Impossible.

Gloria whacks Bridget with the letter.

GLORIA

I mean it.

BRIDGET

Who's got that kind of money? I certainly don't!

Gloria looks at the letter.

GLORIA

They're giving her a month to pay.

ARIELLA

A month?!

GLORIA

Shut up!

BRIDGET

We'll find another place to live. It'll be okay.

Bridget begins to clear the dishes from the table and return the kitchen to order.

GLORIA

How much do you make at the store?

BRIDGET

Twenty five dollars a week.

GLORIA

That's a hundred a month. I make thirty-two a week, or one hundred twenty-eight a month. Ariella?

ARIELLA

It depends.

GLORIA

How much are you making now?

ARIELLA

Twenty dollars a week.

GLORIA

And?

ARIELLA

And ten dollars a week from my parents.

GLORIA

So a hundred and twenty a month. Between the three of us that's

She does a some quick mental math

GLORIA

Three hundred and forty eight dollars a month.

She slams the letter down on the table in triumph.

GLORIA

It's possible.

ARIELLA

We have to eat.

BRIDGET

I have to send money to my family.

GLORIA

Bridget, they haven't written you in a year. Maybe it's time you stop funding their lives.

BRIDGET

They need me.

GLORIA

How would you know? You haven't heard from them!

ARIELLA

Gloria!

GLORIA

Fine, I'm sorry. How much do you need to send them Bridge?

BRIDGET

Fifty a month.

GLORIA

Fifty?! Are you kidding me?

BRIDGET

The reason I came here in the first place was to send money back to them. It's not an easy time.

GLORIA

Fine. Fifty for your family. That leaves us with two hundred and ninety-eight dollars between the three of us. If we pay the bank we would have ninety-eight dollars to live off of.

ARIELLA

That's less than fifty dollars each! For a whole month!

GLORIA

It's thirty-two dollars and sixty six cents each.

ARIELLA

Thirty-two?! Impossible!

BRIDGET

We still have to pay rent, or it's all for nothing.

GLORIA

Right.

BRIDGET

That's twenty-five dollars each which leaves us each with-

GLORIA

Seven dollars.

Ariella 'faints'

GLORIA

And she's been undercharging us, so rent isn't really twenty-five. It's probably more like thirty like everyplace else.

BRIDGET

We'd be left with two dollars.

Ariella weeps loudly from the floor.

BRIDGET

Face facts Gloria. We can't do it.

GLORIA

I am facing facts, but instead of cowering in fear I'm trying to find a way to change them.

Beat

BRIDGET

If you find a way to change the facts I'll help you.

GLORIA

You're a true pal Bridge, thanks.

Gloria takes the letter with her and heads upstairs to her room. She closes the door behind her and sits at her desk, she takes out a paper and pencil and tries to solve the problem in every way she knows how.

Bridget is drying dishes at this point. Ariella is still lying on the floor, but now she rolls onto her back and props herself up.

ARIELLA

I'm sorry she said that about your family.

BRIDGET

She didn't mean anything by it.

ARIELLA

Your family must love you very much.

BRIDGET

I suppose so.

ARIELLA

I mean, you provide for them. I'm just a burden to my parents.

BRIDGET

That's not true. Your parents love you.

ARIELLA

They kicked me out.

BRIDGET

They send you money.

ARIELLA

It's more of a bribe really.

BRIDGET

For what?

ARIELLA

For me to behave myself, I guess.

Bridget has finished with the dishes. She pulls Ariella up from the floor.

BRIDGET

Come on. Let's go to bed.

Bridget leads Ariella up the stairs.

ARIELLA

I wish my parents lived across the ocean.

BRIDGET

No you don't.

ARIELLA

No, you're right. I don't.

BRIDGET

We're a family too you know. You, me, and Gloria. One perfect, happy family.

ARIELLA

And I love you very much.

Ariella kisses Bridget on the cheek and then disappears into her room.

Upstairs in 2017 Gabriella turns off the light and climbs into bed.

LIGHTS OUT.

SCENE 2

The house is empty. It is late afternoon.

Bridget bursts through the front door, out of breath. She's run all the way home.

BRIDGET

Gloria!

Bridget surveys the scene and registers that Gloria is not downstairs. She takes the stairs at a run.

BRIDGET

Gloria, I've got it!

She bursts into their bedroom. Empty.

BRIDGET

Gloria?

She turns to Ariella's room and throws open the door. Empty.

BRIDGET

Where is everybody?

She heads back down the stairs. The front door starts to open, she hears it, she takes the rest of the steps two at a time. She hits the bottom of the stairs as Gloria enters.

BRIDGET
Where have you been?!

Upstairs in 2017 Gabriella enters with her backpack. She makes herself a cup of coffee, sits down at her desk, and begins to study.

GLORIA
School. Has the mail come?

BRIDGET
It's on the table.

Gloria.
Gloria rushes to the table and picks up the mail.

Gloria looks up. Bridget is grinning at her incessantly.

GLORIA
What's wrong with you?

BRIDGET
Absolutely nothing! I figured it out!

GLORIA
Figured what out?

BRIDGET
How to save the house!

Gloria sets down the mail.

GLORIA
I'm listening.

BRIDGET
We take on another tenant! She can stay in Ariella's room! If we have a forth tenant all our rents will be lower and we'll-

GLORIA
Not that much lower Bridge...

BRIDGET
But if she's willing to chip in extra to save the house-

GLORIA

Why would a newbie be willing to pay to save a house she hasn't lived in yet?

BRIDGET

I already found somebody, and she'll do it, I can tell you.

GLORIA

You already found somebody without talking to us?

BRIDGET

She works with me, and she's incredibly sweet, and she doesn't have anywhere to go! She's been sleeping in the store room.

GLORIA

Jesus Mary and Joseph.

BRIDGET

Exactly. She's desperate.

GLORIA

Does she have money?

BRIDGET

She makes the same as me.

GLORIA

Alright fine.

Gloria picks up the mail again, but Bridget snatches it out of her hand.

GLORIA

Hey!

BRIDGET

We have to tell Ms. Winslow, you know.

GLORIA

Is she even home?

Bridget knocks on Ms. Winslow's door. No answer.

BRIDGET

I guess not.

Bridget sits down at the table and hands the mail back to Gloria. Gloria starts flipping through it.

BRIDGET

What are you expecting?

GLORIA

Nothing

BRIDGET

Not nothing. You've been going after the mail like a dog after steak all week.

Gloria finds a letter with her name on it. She gasps.

BRIDGET

Definitely not nothing.

GLORIA

I don't want you to make it a big deal.

BRIDGET

I won't. Promise.

GLORIA

And you can't tell Ariella.

BRIDGET

Cross my heart and hope to die.

GLORIA

I applied to universities this year.

Bridget jumps up and goes to hug her.

BRIDGET

Oh Gloria that's wonder-

GLORIA

Ah ah ah! Stop! It's not a big deal.

BRIDGET

Okay. If you say so.

Bridget sits down.

BRIDGET
But it's very exciting.

GLORIA
Yeah. It is.

Gloria is staring at the letter, but not opening it.

BRIDGET
Is that your first response?

GLORIA
Yes

BRIDGET
From where?

GLORIA
Jefferson Medical College

BRIDGET
Where's that?

GLORIA
Philadelphia

BRIDGET
Phile- why would you want to go there?!

GLORIA
I don't really. I just applied everywhere I could. I want to make sure I get in somewhere.

BRIDGET
Don't go to Philadelphia. That's a world away.

GLORIA
Don't flip your lid! I might not even be accepted.

BRIDGET
Don't be ridiculous. Any university would be lucky to have you.

GLORIA
Bridge. You're always saying be realistic, the odds are stacked against me in case you haven't noticed. It'll be a fight to get in anywhere.

BRIDGET

But you're so smart they can't possibly deny you!

Gloria shrugs.

BRIDGET

Well open it! Let's see who's right!

Gloria tears it open and pulls out a letter.

BRIDGET

What's it say?

GLORIA

We regret to inform you blah blah blah.

BRIDGET

Oh Gloria!

GLORIA

No don't. Please.

BRIDGET

It's their loss.

GLORIA

But it's mine too.

Ms. Winslow opens the front door. Gloria slaps on a smile and tucks the letter into her skirt.

BRIDGET

Afternoon, Ms. Winslow

MS. WINSLOW

Hello ladies.

Ms. Winslow walks past them toward her bedroom.

BRIDGET

Ms. Winslow we found a way to save the house.

GLORIA

Bridget found a way to save the house.

Ms. Winslow sighs.

MS. WINSLOW

Girls, I don't want to save the house-

BRIDGET

But-

MS. WINSLOW

It's time for me to move on.

BRIDGET

We depend on this house! This is our home.

MS. WINSLOW

You can find another-

GLORIA

We don't want to find another place.

MS. WINSLOW

I'm sorry girls, but I'm too old for this.

GLORIA

You're not too old for it. You just aren't trying!

MS. WINSLOW

You don't own this house Gloria. Don't tell me how to run it.

GLORIA

We're offering you a solution!

BRIDGET

Gloria doesn't mean anything by it. She just loves this house. And you! We both love you too.

MS. WINSLOW

You'll find another house with another landlady who you love and who loves you.

BRIDGET

I moved three thousand miles away from my family with nothing but a tiny suitcase, and I found this house. This house, and these girls are my whole life in America, and I will fight tooth and nail before I lose them.

Bridget waits for Ms. Winslow to respond. Ms. Winslow just stares in return.

Gloria puts a hand on Bridget's shoulder.

MS. WINSLOW

Alright. What's your solution?

BRIDGET

A forth tenant.

MS. WINSLOW

Where will she sleep?

BRIDGET

Ariella's room.

MS. WINSLOW

Have you spoken to Ariella about this?

Bridget doesn't hesitate.

BRIDGET

Yes.

MS. WINSLOW

How does that solve the problem of the debt?

BRIDGET

We're going to pay it.

MS. WINSLOW

You?

GLORIA

I did that math. We can do it.

MS. WINSLOW

Girls, you can't pay my debt.

BRIDGET

Yes we can, and we're going to, and in return you're going to keep the house.

MS. WINSLOW

It seems you have it all figured out.

BRIDGET

Yes mum.

MS. WINSLOW

What's the new girl's name?

BRIDGET

Margot. She's very kind and very shy. She won't cause any trouble.

MS. WINSLOW

When do you expect her to move in?

BRIDGET

Tomorrow.

MS. WINSLOW

If she pays rent and does her share of housework I suppose I can't object.

BRIDGET

Oh thank you thank you thank you!

MS. WINSLOW

This doesn't mean I'm keeping the house.

BRIDGET

But if we pay your debt-

MS. WINSLOW

I'll think about it Bridget.

BRIDGET

Thank you.

Ms. Winslow disappears into her room, closing the door behind her.

Bridget jumps up and down.

BRIDGET

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Gloria laughs

GLORIA

Calm down!

BRIDGET

We can stay! We can stay! One big happy family.

Bridget hugs Gloria. Gloria is taken a little off-guard but hugs her back.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 3

Upstairs in 2017 Gabriella sits at her desk, working on her paper. She reads what she has out loud to herself.

GABRIELLA

When you think of women in post-World War II America perhaps you first think of a perfect housewife like Donna Reed or an early feminist icon like Rosie the Riveter. These two iconic post-World War II characters have something in common: they are the idealized American woman. They are white women. White women post-World War II are not an insignificant demographic, but women of color, lower class women, and teen girls are often overlooked in this discussion. In post-World War II America, women of all shapes and sizes were fighting for more rights, more recognition, and a better life.

Gabriella groans.

GABRIELLA

What even is my thesis?

There is a knock at her door. Gabriella goes to answer it. Miss Andrews is on the other side.

MISS ANDREWS

Evening. How's the paper going?

GABRIELLA

Good. Was there something you needed?

MISS ANDREWS

Oh no, no. I just wanted to bring you a little something to help you focus.

Miss Andrews holds up a gift bag.

GABRIELLA

You didn't have to do that.

MISS ANDREWS

I wanted to.

GABRIELLA

Well thank you

Gabriella takes the bag.

GABRIELLA

Should I open it now, or-

MISS ANDREWS

Yes, yes please.

Gabriella opens it. It's a large bag of coffee.

GABRIELLA

Oh, thank you! A girl can never have enough coffee.

MISS ANDREWS

There's more!

GABRIELLA

Oh!

Gabriella reaches back into the bag and pulls out a tin of cinnamon sticks and a jar of sugar.

GABRIELLA

Wow, cinnamon and sugar. Thanks

MISS ANDREWS

It's for Mexican coffee! I read online that you make it with cinnamon and sugar brewed right in. It sounds delicious.

GABRIELLA

I've never tried it that way before.

MISS ANDREWS

Oh you haven't?

GABRIELLA

No, but thank you! I'll try it.

MISS ANDREWS

I just thought that since-

GABRIELLA

I haven't been to Mexico since I was eight.

MISS ANDREWS

Right. Duh! Silly me. Gosh I'm so embarrassed.

GABRIELLA

Don't be. It was a nice thought.

MISS ANDREWS

I'll just get out of your hair.

GABRIELLA

Thank you for the coffee.

MISS ANDREWS

You're welcome. Good luck with the paper.

GABRIELLA

Thanks. Goodnight Miss Andrews.

Miss Andrews leaves. Gabriella looks at the cinnamon and sugar and laughs. She begins to brew more coffee, adding the cinnamon and sugar into the mix. During the course of the following scene Gabriella sits back down at her desk, works on her paper, and eventually falls asleep.

The lights come on downstairs, in the past, as Bridget comes in the front door, a shy Margot tailing behind her.

Ariella walks into her room (the same room that belongs to Gabriella in 2017), and lies on her bed, her nose in a script and a pencil tucked behind her ear.

BRIDGET

Just let me get Ms. Winslow. She'll show you around.

Bridget knocks on Ms. Winslow's door.

MS. WINSLOW (OFF STAGE)

Yes?

BRIDGET

Margot is here.

Ms. Winslow opens the door.

MS. WINSLOW

Hello Margot, I'm Ms. Winslow.

Margot curtsies. Ms. Winslow waits a moment for a spoken response but there is none.

MS. WINSLOW

Alright, follow me please.

Ms. Winslow walks into the kitchen. Margot follows.

Rent will be \$25 a month-

BRIDGET

\$30. Gloria says it should be \$30. For everybody.

Ms. Winslow sighs.

MS. WINSLOW

\$30 a month unless you can't afford it. This is the kitchen. Bridget is kind enough to cook most evenings, but you are responsible for buying your own food. Dishes must be done immediately after eating. I will not have mice in my house.

Ms. Winslow walks towards the stairs.

MS. WINSLOW

This is the door to my room. You may knock if you need me, but you may never open it.

She begins to walk up the stairs.

MS. WINSLOW

The bedrooms are both upstairs. The bathroom is down the hall. You will be sharing a room with Ariella. She's very loud. An actress. Don't complain to me if she bothers you.

They stop outside Ariella's room.

Any questions?

MS. WINSLOW

Margot shakes her head.

MS. WINSLOW

Quiet little thing, aren't you?

Ms. Winslow knocks on Ariella's door.

ARIELLA

(distractedly)

Come in.

Ms. Winslow opens the door.

MS. WINSLOW

Your new roommate has arrived.

ARIELLA

Who?

MS. WINSLOW

Margot

ARIELLA

What?

MS. WINSLOW

Bridget said she told you.

ARIELLA

Bridget didn't tell me anything.

MS. WINSLOW

Well take it up with her if this is a problem.

ARIELLA

No problem per se. Hi Margot.

Margot gives a little wave.

ARIELLA

Don't be shy. Come on in.

MS. WINSLOW

I'll leave you to it.

Ms. Winslow exits, and Margot enters.

ARIELLA

We can pull the beds apart and you can have this one.

Margot just looks at her.

ARIELLA

You can put your things down.

Margot sets her things on the foot of the bed and sits herself next to them.

ARIELLA

Do you talk?

Margot nods

ARIELLA

Well say something then. I don't bite. How old are you?

MARGOT

(Mumbles so it could be mistaken for
'sixteen')

Sechszehn.

ARIELLA

She speaks! Where are you from?

Margot shakes her head.

ARIELLA

Come on. Speak up.

MARGOT

East Berlin.

The smile falls off Ariella's face.

Germany?

ARIELLA

Margot nods.

You're German?

ARIELLA

Margot nods.

Ariella storms out the door.

Ms. Winslow! Ms. Winslow, is this some kind of joke?

MS. WINSLOW

I told you. Take it up with Bridget!

Ms. Winslow escapes into her room.

(Practically shrieking)

Bridget!

ARIELLA

Bridget comes running out of her room, alarmed.

What's wrong?

BRIDGET

Ariella storms back up the stairs.

You shackled me up with a german!

ARIELLA

What?

BRIDGET

Don't "what" me! There's a nazi sitting on my bed!

ARIELLA

Realization dawns on Bridget's face.

BRIDGET

Oh, Ariella, I'm sorry. I didn't think-

ARIELLA

You can say that again.

BRIDGET

She's really very sweet. She's not a nazi at all!

ARIELLA

How would you know? She barely speaks!

BRIDGET

She's been working at the store with me for two weeks. She's been nothing but kind.

ARIELLA

And german.

BRIDGET

That doesn't mean she's a nazi.

ARIELLA

I don't want her in my room.

BRIDGET

And she does speak! You just have to give her some time. She's very shy.

ARIELLA

I don't want to give her time. I want her out.

BRIDGET

But-

ARIELLA

Out Bridget! I mean it!

BRIDGET

Give her a week.

ARIELLA

No.

BRIDGET

Please! Without her we can't save the house.

ARIELLA

Find someone else.

BRIDGET

She needs a place to stay! She's been sleeping in the storeroom.

ARIELLA

In her country my relatives slept in worse conditions.

Beat.

BRIDGET

She's not her country.

ARIELLA

I'm not comfortable living with her.

BRIDGET

She deserves a chance. You can't condemn her because of where she comes from.

ARIELLA

I don't owe her anything.

BRIDGET

Ariella, please. I'll make you breakfast every morning for as long as she's here.

ARIELLA

Breakfast won't change my mind.

BRIDGET

I'll make chicken soup with matzah balls for dinner.

Ariella mulls this over for a moment.

ARIELLA

And rugelach for dessert.

BRIDGET

Deal.

ARIELLA

One week.

BRIDGET

One week.

Ariella heads back up the stairs.

BRIDGET

(under her breath)

At least.

Ariella walks back into her room. Startling Margot who is changing into her nightdress.

ARIELLA

Looks like you're staying. For now.

Margot just stands there watching her.

ARIELLA

Just keep your stuff on that side of the room.

Ariella sits back on her bed and picks up her script, still watching Margot out of the corner of her eye. Margot puts her suitcase under her bed and climbs under the covers.

ARIELLA

I want you to know that I think what you did is unforgivable, and I don't trust you one bit.

Margot just rolls away from Ariella and pulls the blankets over her head.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 4

Lights up on Bridget and Gloria's room. Bridget is penning a letter at her desk. She doesn't look so good. She coughs every once in a while. Gloria is lying on her bed studying, as usual. Ariella bursts in their door without knocking carrying three dresses.

ARIELLA

I can't live with her anymore. I did the week. The week is up. I want her out.

Gloria groans loudly and gets up. She collects her books from her bed and storms out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

ARIELLA

What's the matter with her?

BRIDGET

Why all the dresses?

ARIELLA

Get this! Mr. Campbell loved my performance so much he wants to have dinner with me tonight!

BRIDGET

That's wonderful!

ARIELLA

Isn't it? I bet he wants me to audition for another of his shows. Anyways, I have to look my very best. Sophisticated, and glamorous and ready for anything.

BRIDGET

You always look that way.

ARIELLA

(Swatting Bridget)

Fat-head.

Lights up on Ariella and Margot's room as Gloria enters. Margot is sitting on her bed pouring over a letter. When Gloria enters she jumps a little and folds up the letter quickly.

GLORIA

Hi. Mind if I study in here? Ariella invaded my room.

MARGOT

No.

GLORIA

What are you reading?

MARGOT

Nothing.

GLORIA

Can I give you a piece of advice?

Margot gives a small nod.

GLORIA

If you open up to us a little than we won't be so suspicious of you. At least, I won't.

MARGOT

There is no need to be suspicious.

GLORIA

That's what a murderer would say.

MARGOT

I am not a murderer.

GLORIA

I'm not saying you are. I'm just saying that's a terrible argument.

MARGOT

It does not matter what I say. Ariella already-

GLORIA

Just be nice to her. She'll come around.

MARGOT

She has already decided she hates me.

GLORIA

Sometimes you gotta be nice to the people who hate you just to show them they hate for no good reason.

Margot looks away. Gloria sets her books down on the desk and begins to study.

Ariella holds up the three dresses

ARIELLA

Which one do you think?

BRIDGET

Hold them up one at a time.

ARIELLA

I want Margot out, Bridge. I don't trust her.

BRIDGET

Have you even talked to her?

ARIELLA

Sure I've talked to her.

Ariella holds up the red dress.

ARIELLA

A little too sexy maybe?

BRIDGET

I suppose.

Bridget coughs and groans a little. She sits down on her bed and tries to get more comfortable.

ARIELLA

Are you okay?

BRIDGET

Fine. Just picked up a little cold.

Ariella holds up the blue dress.

ARIELLA

Too frilly?

BRIDGET

I don't think so.

ARIELLA

You have to see it on.

Ariella puts on the dress

BRIDGET

What do you talk to her about?

ARIELLA

Why does that matter?

BRIDGET

I don't believe you've talked to her.

ARIELLA

I've talked to her.

BRIDGET

About what?

ARIELLA

About how I don't trust her one bit.

BRIDGET

Sure, you've talked to her.

ARIELLA

And what do you mean by that?

BRIDGET

Oh, nothing.

ARIELLA

Spill it.

BRIDGET

A conversation the likes of that isn't a conversation at all. It's like you're just a radio announcer talking at her. Even if she said something back you wouldn't hear her, I can tell you.

ARIELLA

Why should I listen to her?

Ariella has gotten the dress on.

ARIELLA

Zip me up.

Bridget obliges

BRIDGET

Because she might have something worth saying.

ARIELLA

What do you think?

BRIDGET

I think it's lovely. And I think you should talk to her.

ARIELLA

It's too frilly. Have *you* talked to her?

Ariella takes off the blue dress with Bridget's help.

BRIDGET

Yes.

ARIELLA

Has she said anything worth saying?

BRIDGET

She hasn't said anything hateful, I can tell you.

ARIELLA

To you she hasn't.

BRIDGET

And she hasn't said anything hateful to you either.

ARIELLA

How would you know?

BRIDGET

What has she said?

ARIELLA

Well... nothing yet.

BRIDGET

Give her a chance. She's clearly hurting.

ARIELLA

She deserves it.

BRIDGET

As far as we know she didn't do anyone harm.

ARIELLA

As far as we know she didn't help anyone either.

Gloria has set herself up at Ariella's desk (also Gabriella's desk). Margot has gone back to reading her letter on the bed.

MARGOT

It is a letter from my mother.

GLORIA

What is?

MARGOT

The letter I am reading.

GLORIA

Oh. Is she still in Germany?

MARGOT

Ja.

GLORIA

Why didn't she come with you?

MARGOT

It was not easy to leave East Berlin. She worked very hard and spent too much money to get me out.

GLORIA

I'm sorry. I'm sure you miss her.

MARGOT

I do. Very much.

GLORIA

What about your father?

MARGOT

He died.

GLORIA

Oh, I'm sorry.

MARGOT

Danke.

GLORIA

I don't speak German.

MARGOT

It means thank you.

GLORIA

Oh, how do you say you're welcome?

MARGOT

Bitte.

GLORIA

Bitte.

Ariella has put on the green dress.

ARIELLA

Do we have a winner?

BRIDGET

Why don't you ask Margot?

ARIELLA

You must be joking.

BRIDGET

You don't even like my taste in clothes!

ARIELLA

I respect your taste, but I also know I hate the blue dress.

BRIDGET

Well if you're never going to wear it why do you keep it?

ARIELLA

Because I only have three nice dresses! I might need it to audition for the role of little bo-peep someday.

BRIDGET

But someone else could get more use out of it.

ARIELLA

Bridge, if you want to borrow it just ask.

BRIDGET

I wasn't fishing for a handout.

ARIELLA

I'm not giving you and handout, I'm just saying you can borrow it.

BRIDGET

Right. Okay, thank you.

ARIELLA

So the green dress?

BRIDGET

I told you, ask Margot.

ARIELLA

I'm wearing the green dress.

BRIDGET

Fine.

ARIELLA

It needs a necklace though right? Don't you think?

BRIDGET

Definitely.

ARIELLA

Do you have one?

BRIDGET

What do you think?

ARIELLA

I just thought I'd ask.

BRIDGET

Margot has one.

ARIELLA

Don't try that with me. I'm not falling for it.

BRIDGET

She does! I've seen it!

ARIELLA

I don't believe you.

BRIDGET

It was her mothers I think. A string of pearls.

Ariella looks in the mirror and touches her bare décolletage thoughtfully.

BRIDGET

It would look perfect.

Ariella is considering it, but she changes her mind.

ARIELLA

My locket will do the trick.

Ariella gathers up her other dresses.

ARIELLA

Get some rest. You look wretched.

BRIDGET

Thanks very much.

Ariella leaves Bridget's room and heads to her own,

GLORIA

Why did you come to Brooklyn?

MARGOT

Why did you?

GLORIA

For a better education.

MARGOT

I came to survive.

Ariella pauses outside the door when she hears Gloria and Margot talking. She listens in.

GLORIA

But, you're so... I mean, you have blonde hair and-

MARGOT

I am aryan, yes. That makes it worse in East Berlin. The Soviet soldiers are not kind.

GLORIA

I thought West Berlin was the problem.

MARGOT

West Berlin is America's problem. East Berlin is our problem. The Soviet's police our streets, and they take. Whatever they want. Whomever they want.

Ariella enters.

ARIELLA

What are you studying now, Gloria? Poetic justice?

Margot busies herself with her letter, refusing to look at Ariella.

GLORIA

Nice dress.

ARIELLA

You think so?

GLORIA

I need to study.

Gloria gathers her things and heads to the door. Ariella gets her locket out of her jewelry box and puts it on. Gloria turns back to Margot.

GLORIA

Maybe you could teach me a little German.

MARGOT

I do not think I am a very good teacher.

GLORIA

I'm a very good student.

MARGOT

I can try.

GLORIA

Killer diller.

Gloria leaves, going back to her room.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 5

The next morning Margot is downstairs in the kitchen preparing breakfast.

Bridget and Gloria are in their room. Bridget is tucked into bed with the blankets pulled up to her chin. Gloria is sitting at the foot of her bed, doting on her.

In 2017, Gabriella is sitting at her desk with a steaming cup of coffee, working on her paper.

Ariella, wrapped in her robe, comes down the stairs with an unusual quietness.

ARIELLA

Bridge can I talk to you for-

Margot turns around, and Ariella realizes she's made a mistake.

ARIELLA

Where's Bridget?

MARGOT

Still sleeping I think.

Ariella heads back up the stairs. She opens Bridget's door without knocking. Gloria shoots up from where she sits and backs Ariella out of the room as quietly as possible.

GLORIA

Out out out.

ARIELLA

I need to talk to Bridget.

GLORIA

She's sleeping.

ARIELLA

It's important.

GLORIA

She's sick, Ariella. Whatever you have to tell her can wait.

ARIELLA

I need to-

GLORIA

Go tell Margot!

ARIELLA

I can't-

GLORIA

Out!

Gloria closes the door in her face. Ariella wraps her robe more tightly around herself and walks back down the stairs to the kitchen.

Meanwhile, Gloria sits back down on Bridget's bed.

GLORIA

What hurts?

BRIDGET

My stomach. My head.

GLORIA

Would you like me to get you anything? Water maybe?

Downstairs:

MARGOT

Would you like an egg?

Ariella brushes past her without responding and begins preparing her own breakfast, placing a pan on the stove and grabbing an egg from the carton.

Upstairs:

BRIDGET

Has the mail come yet?

GLORIA

It's a little early

BRIDGET

Was there anything for me in yesterday's?

GLORIA

I didn't see yesterday's mail. I think Margot brought it in.

BRIDGET

Would you check?

GLORIA

What are you looking for?

BRIDGET

Anything from home.

GLORIA

Okay, rest your eyes for a minute.

Gloria leaves quietly and heads downstairs.

Margot takes her own breakfast to the table.

MARGOT

I am a good listener, if you need to talk.

Ariella cracks her egg into the pan.

Gloria enters the kitchen as Margot is leaving (for the bathroom).

MARGOT

(in passing)

Guten Morgen!

GLORIA

Morning. Have you seen the mail?

MARGOT

On the table.

Margot heads up the stairs. She goes into the bathroom.

Gloria goes to the sink and wets a clean washcloth. She then grabs the mail from the table and heads back towards the stairs flipping through it. She freezes.

The toilet upstairs flushes.

Gloria tears open an envelope and pours over the contents.

Margot returns from the bathroom and begins to walk back down the stair. When she sees Gloria-

MARGOT

Is everything okay?

GLORIA

Hm? Oh yes. Yes everything is fine.

MARGOT

Oh, you look-

GLORIA

Can you keep a secret?

MARGOT

Yes

GLORIA

You have to promise not to tell the others.

MARGOT

Of course. I promise.

GLORIA

I mean it. Cross your heart and hope to die.

MARGOT

What?!

GLORIA

It's an oath, kind of. 'Cross my heart and hope to die. Stick a needle in my eye.' It just means you promise.

MARGOT

And Americans think Germans are dark...

GLORIA

Just say it.

MARGOT

Cross my heart and hope to die.

GLORIA

Okay.

She hands Margot the letter.

GLORIA

I got accepted into Cornell's mathematics program.

MARGOT

Oh Wunderbar! Congratulations!

GLORIA

Shhh! Not so loud!

MARGOT

This is so exciting! Why is it a secret?

GLORIA

I don't want to upset anyone.

MARGOT

Why would they be upset?

GLORIA

Because I would have to leave. If I enroll.

MARGOT

Of course you are going to enroll! They have offered you a scholarship!

GLORIA

It's a big decision.

MARGOT

Do not turn stupid now.

Gloria hugs her and fairly quickly lets go.

GLORIA

Not a word.

MARGOT

Cross my heart and hope to die.

Margot heads down the stairs back to the kitchen where she finds Ariella putting her egg on a plate.

Gloria goes to Bridget's room.

Margot and Ariella both sit down at the kitchen table, but as far from each other as possible. Margot begins to eat her breakfast.

MARGOT

I made fresh bread. You are welcome to have a slice if you'd like.

ARIELLA

(snapping at her)

No I would not like. Shove off!

MARGOT

I only try to be helpful.

ARIELLA

Well quit it.

MARGOT

I am sorry you hate me. I am sorry to be here. I do not want to be here at all but there is nothing either you or I can do about it, so please, can we be kind?

Nothing from Ariella

MARGOT

I am not a monster. I have never killed anybody.

ARIELLA

Congratulations.

Beat

MARGOT

My father killed himself.

Silence from Ariella.

MARGOT

When he saw pictures of the camps for the first time he came home, he took his pistol outside into the garden and he shot himself among the cornflowers. Do you know the story about the cornflowers?

Silence

MARGOT

Queen Louise of Prussia was running from Napoleon, and to protect her children, she hid them in a field of cornflowers and wove beautiful purple crowns to keep them quiet. Every girl in Berlin is supposed to be like Queen Louise. The picture of motherhood.

Beat

MARGOT

She died young, Queen Louise did. The French occupation drove her to her grave. The cornflower became a national symbol. Our soldiers wear it to remind them what they're fighting for. When my father wore it I thought it meant he was fighting for me. Now, I think it meant he was fighting for his country, and his country betrayed him. So he turned the cornflowers red with his own blood.

ARIELLA

How do you know he didn't kill himself because he knew the world was going to punish him for what he did?

MARGOT

My father was in the Luftwaffe. He never fought on the ground. He never saw the camps.

ARIELLA

But he knew about them.

MARGOT

Even if he did know, how can you say you would have done different? Was he supposed to commit treason? He would have been killed and we would have been killed along with him.

ARIELLA

He should have done something. Everyone should have been doing something.

MARGOT

I am sorry.

ARIELLA

Stop saying that.

Margot falls silent. They both eat.

Upstairs:

GLORIA

I brought you a damp cloth for you head.

Gloria places the cloth on Bridget's forehead

BRIDGET

Is there any mail for me?

Gloria had forgotten about the original reason she fetched the mail.

GLORIA

Oh! Um-

She quickly flips through the stack

GLORIA

Yes! Here.

Bridget takes the letter from her but she doesn't have the energy to open it. She hands it back to Gloria.

BRIDGET

Would you mind reading it to me?

GLORIA

Not at all.

Gloria unfolds the letter and reads:

GLORIA

Dear Bridget,

The conditions of the field have improved none. I can't say I don't begrudge you your position. I've been hearing the United States have got more food than they know what to do with. Load up a boat I tell ya, and sail it all to Ireland.

Gloria stops and looks at Bridget.

BRIDGET

Keep reading.

GLORIA

Um,

She clears her throat and continues

GLORIA

Don't think I don't know you Americans don't share. Well Bridget, it would do ya good to remember your family.

Gloria stops reading.

GLORIA

I don't think-

BRIDGET

Finish it.

Gloria hesitates but then continues.

GLORIA

I know you're holding back your earnings. Don't be a saphead. Send it along. We need it more than you do.

Sincerely,

Your Mam

Gloria checks in with Bridget, concerned.

BRIDGET

Is that the end of it?

Gloria nods slowly, but then changes her mind and shakes her head.

GLORIA

Not quite.

BRIDGET

Read it.

GLORIA

P.S. I got your note. I don't think it'd be wise to come back for Christmas. We don't have the room.

Gloria folds up the letter.

GLORIA

That's it.

BRIDGET

Okay

Bridget rolls away from Gloria

GLORIA

I'm sorry.

BRIDGET

It's nothing.

GLORIA

Does she always write to you like that?

Bridget doesn't answer.

GLORIA

Why do you keep writing back?

BRIDGET

They need my help.

GLORIA

Do they?

BRIDGET

You read it. She said they're hungry.

GLORIA

Are you sure she's not just saying that?

BRIDGET

Why would they say it if it wasn't true?

GLORIA

Maybe to get you to send more money.

BRIDGET

She wouldn't do that.

GLORIA

She didn't even ask after your health.

BRIDGET

It would have been a bleak report anyway.

GLORIA

Curse her.

BRIDGET

She's me Mam.

GLORIA

That doesn't mean much. I'm a better mother to you than she is.

Beat

BRIDGET

She didn't even ask after me.

GLORIA

Oh Bridget...

BRIDGET

Everyone warned me this'd happen. Irish don't take kindly to their folks leaving for America, but me own Mam-

GLORIA

Don't send them any more.

BRIDGET

I don't have any more to send.

Bridget starts to cry but it turns into a coughing fit instead. Gloria helps her lay back down on her pillow.

GLORIA

It's okay. Slowly. Slowly. Breathe Bridge.

My stomach!

BRIDGET

When did you eat last?

GLORIA

Bridget looks away.

GLORIA

Bridge? Did you have dinner last night?

BRIDGET

No

GLORIA

What did you eat for lunch?

BRIDGET

I didn't.

GLORIA

Breakfast yesterday?

BRIDGET

I think I had something. A slice of bread.

GLORIA

Good Lord Bridget! A slice of bread? I'm getting you something to eat.

Gloria stands to go.

BRIDGET

I don't have any food.

Gloria stops.

GLORIA

What do you mean?

BRIDGET

I don't have any money for food.

GLORIA

Then you'll eat something of mine.

Gloria leaves Bridget. Before she starts downstairs
Ariella decides to open up to Margot.

ARIELLA

Mr. Campbell asked me to go back to his apartment with him.

MARGOT

Who?

ARIELLA

The producer I had dinner with last night.

MARGOT

Oh.

ARIELLA

I said I couldn't, that my roommates were waiting on me.

MARGOT

Do you like this man?

ARIELLA

Oh god no. He's a wart.

MARGOT

How did he take it?

ARIELLA

He asked to reschedule for tonight instead. He says he has a big part in a Broadway play that I would be perfect for! So I said I'd check my schedule and give him a ring.

MARGOT

But if he invited you to his home he's after something specific.

ARIELLA

I know that. But a part in a Broadway play could-

Gloria reaches the bottom of the stairs. And Ariella falls
silent.

Gloria begins to prepare food for Bridget.

GLORIA

Did you know Bridget hasn't been eating?

ARIELLA

What?

GLORIA

Bridget hasn't eaten in at least a day. Her family's been robbing her blind.

MARGOT

Ach je

ARIELLA

She can have some of my food.

GLORIA

I'm giving her some of mine.

ARIELLA

Poor Bridge...

Ariella goes back to eating. A quiet moment passes.

ARIELLA

Hey Gloria, if you had the opportunity of a lifetime in your reach, but you had to do something you really didn't want to do to get it, would you?

GLORIA

Of course. You make sacrifices to get what you want. It's part of life.

MARGOT

I don't think this is the same thing-

ARIELLA

Gloria is the smartest one here.

GLORIA

You've got that right.

ARIELLA

It's settled then. Thank you.

MARGOT

Ariella, I-

ARIELLA

It's settled. I don't want to talk about it anymore.

Ariella exits down the hall (offstage) to the phone.

MARGOT

I hope you are happy.

GLORIA

What are you going on about?

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

Yes, I'd like to make a collect call to Richard Campbell please.

MARGOT

That was the worst advice I ever heard.

GLORIA

What, you don't think she should sacrifice a little for what she wants? It wouldn't hurt her to start cutting down on the extra expenses.

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

Good morning Mr. Campbell, this is Ariella calling.

MARGOT

She's not talking about sacrificing her spending money. She's going to a producers house tonight. Alone.

GLORIA

She's what?!

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

I'd like to take you up on your offer for dinner tonight. I've always wanted to see the inside of a penthouse.

GLORIA

Ariella!

Gloria heads to the hallway as fast as she can.

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

Mhm, I'll be looking forward to it. Goodbye!

The phone clicks on the hook.

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

What's the matter with you?

The pair return to the stage

GLORIA

Going to a man's house all alone at night? Have you lost your mind?

ARIELLA

You told me to go after what I want!

GLORIA

But not like this!

ARIELLA

It's a small sacrifice for the big stage.

MARGOT

It is larger than you might think.

GLORIA

Don't be ridiculous Ariella. You can't whore yourself out just to-

ARIELLA

Now wait just a minute!

MARGOT

I do not like that word.

GLORIA

Well it's what you're doing isn't it?

ARIELLA

I am not going to have sex with Mr. Campbell. Really! What kind of a girl do you think I am?

GLORIA

What do you think is going to happen?

ARIELLA

I'm going to make him think I want to have sex with him, and then leave him begging for more.

MARGOT

He could decide to take more.

GLORIA

Margot's right. You'll be all by yourself. What are you going to do if he decides he wants more.

ARIELLA

I'll charm my way out.

MARGOT

Men are animals.

GLORIA

You can't go to his house alone. It's not safe.

ARIELLA

I can take care of myself.

MARGOT

Then don't go!

ARIELLA

I've already told him I'm going.

Ariella walks off up the stairs.

GLORIA

I'll tell Ms. Winslow!

Ariella freezes. She turns back.

ARIELLA

You breath a word to Ms. Winslow and I'll tell her you dismantled her blender to get the parts for your mini propeller plane!

GLORIA

You would never.

ARIELLA

Try me.

An intense staring contest ensues for a few seconds before Gloria breaks away and barges up the stairs.

In 2017 Gabriella is sitting at her desk working on her paper. Gabriella hears an incoming email sound from her computer. She opens the email and begins to read.

GABRIELLA

Gabriella, while I enjoy your fervor for the topic of immigration, this was not your thesis at the beginning of your paper. While immigrant women are certainly part of this population, it seems as if you are skewing your paper to focus solely on immigrant women, rather than women of all shapes and sizes. And while I also appreciate relating the issue to yourself, I would cut out the use of "we" in your paper entirely.

She angry crumples the papers in front of her and throws them on the ground with a yell.

GABRIELLA

Screw her!

Miss Andrews knocks on her door. Gabriella gets up and answers it.

GABRIELLA

Hi

Miss Andrews welcomes herself in.

GABRIELLA

(Sarcastic)

Please. Come in. I'm not busy.

Gabriella does not close the door.

MISS ANDREWS

I just wanted to check in! I haven't heard from you in a while.

GABRIELLA

I've been preoccupied.

MISS ANDREWS

Would you be able to watch Tigger this weekend?

GABRIELLA

No I can't. Sorry. I have to finish this paper.

MISS ANDREWS

You seem upset. Are you upset?

GABRIELLA

I'm fine.

Miss Andrews fingers some crumpled papers.

MISS ANDREWS

It's gotten to be a bit of a mess in here.

GABRIELLA

Mhm.

Miss Andrews picks up one of the papers.

MISS ANDREWS

Is this your essay?

She reads

MISS ANDREWS

In the second half of the 20th century the south needed more cheap labor, so the United States encouraged immigration from Mexico, becoming the most significant-

Gabriella snatches it out of her hand.

MISS ANDREWS

Fascinating. I didn't know that.

GABRIELLA

I'm not surprised. Look. I'm really busy. I just got some rotten feedback from my professor and I'm not in the mood to socialize.

MISS ANDREWS

Listen. Gabriella. You know I have loved having you as a tenant. You always pay your rent on time, and you do me the favor of watching Tigger-

GABRIELLA

What's the but?

MISS ANDREWS

You're certainly perceptive.

GABRIELLA

You're not obtuse.

MISS ANDREWS

I've been looking into the legality of renting to you after your permit expires.

GABRIELLA

I don't think it's illegal.

MISS ANDREWS

There was a landlord in Kansas city who was arrested and charged with harboring a fugitive. I'm not well-versed in legal jargon, so I'm not prepared to take any risks. I hope you can understand.

GABRIELLA

Hm.

MISS ANDREWS

I've read the renting laws are extremely relaxed in California. Maybe you could try there! I'd be happy to write you a letter of recommendation for you.

GABRIELLA

I'll be out by the end of the semester.

Gabriella starts picking up her crumpled papers and throwing them in the trash. Miss Andrews takes her cue and heads for the door.

MISS ANDREWS

I really am sorry about this Gabriella.

GABRIELLA

(as if to say "don't be sorry. Do something about it")

Don't be.

Miss Andrews leaves. Gabriella closes the door behind her.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 6

Gloria and Margot are set up at the kitchen table, pouring over textbooks, pencils in hand.

MARGOT

(Groaning)

I do not understand!

GLORIA

It's okay. This is really cutting edge stuff. Try again. What can travel faster than light?

MARGOT

Nothing.

GLORIA

Right, but what travels faster: light through air or light through water?

MARGOT

Light through water?

GLORIA

Light through air. The water is an obstacle that the light has to push through, so it slows down.

Gloria picks up a glass of water on the table and sticks her pencil in it.

GLORIA

The light bends when it shines through water. That's what makes the pencil look broken.

MARGOT

So light travels faster when nothing is in its way.

GLORIA

Exactly.

MARGOT

But all the light is the same.

GLORIA

Yes. It's the obstacle that makes the difference.

MARGOT

This is too difficult for me. I want to go back to the laws of motion.

(Reciting)

An object in motion remains in motion until acted upon by an outside force.

GLORIA

If you're not going to let us study the hard stuff teach me more German.

MARGOT

Repeat after me. Ich hasse die Wissenschaft.

GLORIA

Ich hasse die Wissenschaft.

MARGOT

Good. What does it mean?

GLORIA

I hate the... What is Wissenschaft?

MARGOT

Science.

GLORIA

Hey! That was a dirty trick. Ich liebe die Wissenschaft!

Margot laughs

MARGOT

Sehr gut!

GLORIA

Teach me how to say light.

MARGOT

Licht.

GLORIA

Licht ist schnell. Licht wandert langsamer durch Wasser. Aber alles Licht ist gleich. Wie Menschen.

Bridget enters

GLORIA

Alles sind gleich.

Margot groans and rolls her eyes.

MARGOT

No more science.

BRIDGET

Are you making her study again?

GLORIA

She's got potential.

MARGOT

If I learned science as quickly as Gloria learned German I could beat your NASA into space myself!

Bridget takes a few dollar bills from her purse and hands them to Gloria.

GLORIA

What's this for?

BRIDGET

It's what I owe.

GLORIA

You don't owe me a cent Bridge.

BRIDGET

For all the food you've been giving me.

Gloria hands it back.

GLORIA

Think of it as a gift.

Bridget refuses to take it.

BRIDGET

I want to pay it back.

GLORIA

I can't take your money.

BRIDGET

It's alright. I have enough.

GLORIA

I know exactly how much you make Bridget. I keep your account books, don't forget.

BRIDGET

I'm not going to send any to Ireland anymore.

Gloria relents and takes the money. She pulls Bridget into a hug.

GLORIA

I'm proud of you. They don't deserve a penny.

BRIDGET

Let's leave it alone. Please.

GLORIA

Sure thing.

Ariella comes home through the front door. She marches directly to the kitchen reaches for the cookie jar. She opens the lid to take one out, then decides one is not enough, and takes the whole jar with her to the table. Margot busies herself with a physics textbook.

GLORIA

How was rehearsal?

ARIELLA

How do you think?

BRIDGET

Did something happen?

ARIELLA

Nothing happened I just- Nothing happened.

Bridget sits down at the table with the rest of them.

GLORIA

Is it Mr. Campbell?

Ariella glares at Gloria.

ARIELLA

Everything with Richard is fine.

Ariella looks away from Gloria.

ARIELLA

Acting is hard. That's all.

BRIDGET

But you're so good at it!

ARIELLA

Not as good as everyone else. I have so much to prove, and I feel miles behind the other actors.

BRIDGET

You don't have anything to prove.

ARIELLA

They all think I'm just there because of Richard.

GLORIA

Well, aren't you?

BRIDGET

Gloria!

GLORIA

No, that's the truth.

ARIELLA

I did what I had to do to get what I want. Nobody can say I didn't earn my place.

GLORIA

But what did it cost you?

ARIELLA

I took your advice Gloria! Don't tell me *now* it was rotten.

GLORIA

If I'd known the whole story to begin with I would never have-

MARGOT

I tried to tell you-

ARIELLA

(To Margot)

If I had taken your advice I wouldn't have a real acting job.

GLORIA

But if you'd taken her advice you wouldn't be stress eating an entire jar of Bridget's cookies right now.

BRIDGET

It doesn't matter whose advice she took. That's over and done with.

GLORIA

But she's still seeing him!

ARIELLA

You make it sound like an affair.

GLORIA

Isn't it?

ARIELLA

Certainly not! I let him take me out to dinner and show me off around town-

GLORIA

And at the end of the night you go home to his bed-

ARIELLA

To his living room.

GLORIA

And what? What do you do there?

ARIELLA

That's none of your business.

GLORIA

You're ashamed.

Ariella stands up, cradling the jar of cookies in her arms.

GLORIA

And you should be.

ARIELLA

I'm not ashamed.

GLORIA

Then it shouldn't matter if the other actors think you're there because of Mr. Campbell.

ARIELLA

Of course it matters! They think I don't have talent, but I do. Richard wouldn't want me in the show if I didn't have talent.

GLORIA

Yeah, you've got a talented mouth and a talented hole between your legs.

Gloria!

BRIDGET

Ariella drops the cookie jar and it shatters as she lunges for Gloria, grabbing hold of her hair, her dress, anything.

Margot shoots up from the table with a shriek and backs up against the wall covering her face with her hands.

Ariella and Gloria scuffle.

How dare you?

ARIELLA

Am I wrong?

GLORIA

Ariella throws a punch. Gloria ducks it.

You have no right!

ARIELLA

Stop this fighting!

MARGOT

I have never been anything but kind to you!

ARIELLA

Gloria gets Ariella by the hair, and pulls her face close to her own.

Tell me I'm wrong!

GLORIA

Ariella spits.

Stop it!

BRIDGET

Ariella kicks Gloria and breaks free of her grip. Gloria starts to charge for Ariella, but Bridget steps in the way and catches her arm, pulling with all her might. Gloria is stronger, so Bridget's attempt to hold her back is almost comical.

BRIDGET

Let it go, Gloria.

Gloria relents.

GLORIA

Fine.

Bridget lets go of her.

GLORIA

If she wants to be a whore that's her business.

Ariella charges Gloria and tackles her to the ground.
Punches fly, they scream.

MARGOT

Please! Stop it! Please!

BRIDGET

(losing it)

Look what you've done! Look what you've done to my cookies!

Gloria and Ariella stop fighting.

BRIDGET

You've shattered my cookie jar! You've torn your clothes! You've scared Margot half to death! You've ruined this entire night because of a stupid fight!

GLORIA

Bridge, I-

BRIDGET

I don't care what Ariella does with Mr. Campbell! I don't care what advice you gave her! I just want everyone to be happy and enjoy a good meal! Is that too much to ask?!

Beat.

Ariella stands up, brushes herself off and walks up the stairs.

Gloria stands, brushes herself off, and makes as if to follow Ariella, but Margot reaches the bottom of the stairs before Gloria and she gives Gloria a look as if to say “don’t you dare” before turning and exiting up the stairs.

Gloria turns to Bridget

GLORIA

I didn’t mean-

BRIDGET

Leave it alone.

Bridget begins to sweep up the broken glass.

GLORIA

I’m sorry about the cookie jar. I’ll buy you a new one.

BRIDGET

My mother gave it to me.

Beat.

GLORIA

I’m really sorry.

BRIDGET

It’s okay. It happens.

Bridget continues to clean up the mess that is the kitchen in silence. Gloria watches her for a few seconds, but soon starts to help her.

Upstairs in Ariella and Margot’s room, Ariella is sitting in front of her mirror examining her injuries. She’ll have some bruises tomorrow. Margot sits on her bed, watching Ariella.

MARGOT

It does not matter what you’ve done with him.

ARIELLA

I don’t really care what you think about it.

MARGOT

I want you to know nothing he's made you do makes you a... whore.

ARIELLA

He hasn't made me do anything.

MARGOT

I just want you to know.

ARIELLA

I know, okay? I know.

MARGOT

I hate that she called you that.

ARIELLA

Look, I'm sure you're trying to help, but I don't want to hear it.

Margot falls silent. Ariella looks back to her mirror. A moment passes.

MARGOT

Back home my mother and I were very hungry, but I made an arrangement with a soviet soldier. I gave him what he wanted and he gave us food. You do what you have to do, but it is not as easy as you think it will be.

ARIELLA

Did you stop?

MARGOT

I left.

Ariella looks away from her reflection in the mirror and takes off her dress, getting ready for bed. She pulls a robe on over her slip.

MARGOT

Mr. Campbell is not soldier. If you want to stop you can stop.

ARIELLA

But what would it cost me?

The girls get ready for bed.

In 2017 Gabriella is sitting at her desk typing away at her computer making final revisions.

GABRIELLA

(Reading revisions)

Today immigrant women outnumber immigrant men. Many single women move to the United States in hope of a better life, a safer life, and a more equal playing field. Immigrant women today face many of the same struggles immigrant women Post-World War II faced.

(No longer reading)

Oh it's so bad. Why is it so bad? Whatever. I don't care. I don't care anymore. It's a B paper at least.

(Submitting the paper on her computer as she talks)

Save. Upload. Upload. Come *on*! Upload! Okay great. Submit.

Gabriella just looks at her computer for a moment. She smiles.

GABRIELLA

Done.

She looks at the computer a moment longer, then looks around her room. She lets out a large sigh.

GABRIELLA

Oh boy.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 7

In 2017 Gabriella has half packed boxes stacked around her. She spends the scene emptying her apartment into these boxes.

In 1949 Bridget is in the kitchen making breakfast, cheerfully humming 'The Leaving of Liverpool' to herself. Gloria is upstairs in their room quietly packing two bags. It is early morning.

Gloria adds her books to the top of her suitcase and closes it up. She puts on her coat.

BRIDGET

(singing)

So fare thee well my own true love.

Bridget goes back to humming. Gloria takes one last look around the room. She stops next to Bridget's bed. She gets a piece of paper from Bridget's desk and writes a quick note. She stuffs it under Bridget's pillow.

BRIDGET

(Singing)

And I will write to thee a letter, love,

Bridget goes back to humming. Gloria grabs her bags and quietly exits, refusing to look back. She sets a textbook on the floor outside Margot and Ariella's room, before creeping down the stairs as quietly as possible.

BRIDGET

(Singing)

It's not the leaving of Liverpool that grieves me
But my darling when I think of thee

Bridget has her back to Gloria and doesn't hear her enter over her own singing. Gloria creeps towards the front door on her toes. Bridget goes back to humming. Gloria is almost to the door when Bridget turns around and notices her.

BRIDGET

Where are you off to?

GLORIA

Um, just out.

BRIDGET

Why are your bags packed?

GLORIA

I'm going home to visit my mother.

BRIDGET

For how long?

GLORIA

Uh, well, she's- I don't know.

BRIDGET

Is everything okay?

GLORIA

Yes everything's fine. She just needs a little help for a few days.

BRIDGET

Oh, okay. Well, at least eat some breakfast before you go.

Bridget begins preparing her a plate.

GLORIA

I can't. I have to catch the 9:00am train.

Upstairs, Margot comes out of her room and sees the textbook on the ground. She picks it up, looks at it for a moment and then runs down the stairs.

Bridget rolls her eyes and wraps a scone in a napkin.

BRIDGET

Then take a scone for the road.

GLORIA

Thanks.

BRIDGET

Write me as soon as you get there.

GLORIA

I will. Cross my heart.

Margot arrives in the kitchen.

MARGOT

You're leaving so soon?! I thought you still had a few more days!

GLORIA

Uh, turns out I have to go today.

MARGOT

You weren't even going to say goodbye?

GLORIA

I didn't want to wake you.

Margot gives her a long hard hug.

MARGOT

Thank you for everything.

BRIDGET

What are you getting all steamy eyed for! She'll be back before we know it.

Margot looks at Bridget, confused. She looks at Gloria.

MARGOT

Back? What does she mean you'll be back?

BRIDGET

What do you mean what do I mean? Course she'll be back.

MARGOT

Gloria...

GLORIA

Well, I have to get going. I'll miss the bus.

BRIDGET

Bus? I thought you said you were catching the train?

GLORIA

Train. Right. Slip of the tongue.

MARGOT

Gloria.

GLORIA

I'll see you all soon. Don't burn the place down while I'm gone!

Gloria starts to exit. Bridget runs and grabs her arm.

BRIDGET

Wait. What's going on?

GLORIA

Nothing. I need to catch my train.

MARGOT

Don't leave it like this.

BRIDGET

You're scaring me! Where are you going?

MARGOT

Gloria.

Gloria sighs.

GLORIA

Bridge, promise you won't be mad.

BRIDGET

I can't promise until I know what this is about.

GLORIA

It's not as bad as it seems. Everything is going to be fine.

BRIDGET

Out with it!

GLORIA

I got into Cornell. I need to catch the nine a.m. bus to Ithaca.

BRIDGET

What?

GLORIA

I'm going to school, Bridge. A real science program.

BRIDGET

Ithaca? You can't!

GLORIA

It's only a six hour bus ride. You can come visit.

BRIDGET

Six hours? When am I going to have time for a twelve hour round trip?

GLORIA

On the weekends?

BRIDGET

I work weekends. You'll be working weekends. Everybody here is working weekends.

GLORIA

It'll be okay Bridge.

BRIDGET

And you were just going to walk out without saying a word?

GLORIA

I left a note under your pillow.

BRIDGET

A note?! You were going to say goodbye with a note?!

GLORIA

I didn't want- This is too hard Bridge. This is too hard.

Gloria walks toward the door again. Bridget snatches a suitcase out of her hand.

GLORIA

What are you doing? Give it back!

BRIDGET

You're not leaving. I won't let you.

Gloria sets down her other bag and walks towards Bridget. Bridget backs away from her.

GLORIA

Bridge give it back.

BRIDGET

No.

Gloria lunges for her, and catches her arm.

GLORIA

Bridge.

BRIDGET

Let go!

GLORIA

This is my dream.

BRIDGET

But we're family! You don't give up family for dreams.

GLORIA

Don't you?

Bridget rips her arm away from Gloria.

BRIDGET

Not me. This is my dream. You and Margot and Ariella and this house.

GLORIA

And you'll still have me. I'll just be in Ithaca.

BRIDGET

That's not the same! You'll forget to write. You'll never visit. You won't have the time. Pretty soon you'll forget all about me!

GLORIA

It won't be like it was with your family. I promise. I'll ask after you. I'll come home for your birthday and Christmas, as long as you're still here.

BRIDGET

But I won't be here. None of us will be here. If you leave Ms. Winslow will lose the house. She won't take on another tenant, I know it! She didn't want Margot here as it was!

MARGOT

She didn't?

GLORIA

It'll be fine.

BRIDGET

How can you say that?

GLORIA

Because everything is fine in the end.

BRIDGET

It'll be fine for you! You're going to school, getting a degree. You don't care what happens to us.

GLORIA

Of course I do!

BRIDGET

If you really cared you would stay.

GLORIA

This is what I've always dreamed about! Things like this don't just get handed to people like me. I have to give it everything I've got.

BRIDGET

I hope it's worth it.

Bridget backs away.

GLORIA

Can I have my suitcase please?

Bridget tightens her grip on the bag.

GLORIA

I have to catch my bus.

Bridget suddenly throws the bag at Gloria. Gloria maybe catches it, maybe not.

BRIDGET

Fine! Take your bag! Go!

GLORIA

Bridget...

Gloria steps towards her.

BRIDGET

I never want to hear from you again!

GLORIA

Please don't make me leave like this.

BRIDGET

I'm not making you do anything.

GLORIA

I'm sorry Bridge. I'm really sorry.

Gloria gathers her bags. Bridget turns her back.

GLORIA

Goodbye Bridge.

Bridget doesn't turn around.

GLORIA

Bye Margot.

MARGOT

Write us when you get there.

GLORIA

I will.

Gloria steps out the door, closing it behind her.

Bridget busies herself with breakfast.

MARGOT

She had to go, Bridget.

BRIDGET

It's not fair.

MARGOT

I know.

BRIDGET

She didn't tell me. She should have told me.

MARGOT

I think she was afraid to.

BRIDGET

Coward.

Ms. Winslow comes home through the front door.

MS. WINSLOW

(Saying hello)

Girls

MARGOT

Hello Ms. Winslow.

MS. WINSLOW

What's going on?

MARGOT

Gloria-

BRIDGET

Nothing! We just had a fight that's all.

MS. WINSLOW

Gloria left this morning?

BRIDGET

What?

MARGOT

Yes

BRIDGET

She told you?

MS. WINSLOW

Of course she told me. I'll need you three to start looking for another place to live.

BRIDGET

No! Ms. Winslow, please. I can find another roommate!

MS. WINSLOW

No Bridget, I'm finished. It's time to move on.

MARGOT

Bridge, there are other houses.

BRIDGET

I've been in this one since the beginning.

MARGOT

Everyone moves.

BRIDGET

Not me. I want to be done moving.

MARGOT

You are too young to be done moving.

MS. WINSLOW

I'm clearing out and moving to my sisters at the end of the month.

BRIDGET

But you can't leave.

MS. WINSLOW

She has a yard and a flower garden. I can go outside and sit and watch the birds and butterflies. I can breath.

BRIDGET

I'm going to find another girl. Don't you worry.

Bridget heads for the door.

MS. WINSLOW

I won't take her Bridget. It's time to move on.

Bridget exits.

MARGOT

I found a house in Flatbush. They have been looking for one more girl to move in. Their land lady is from Germany.

MS. WINSLOW

That will be perfect for you Margot.

MARGOT

Yes, I hope so. I will have my things gone by the end of the month.

Ms. Winslow takes a step towards her room and hurts her back. She grimaces. Margot rushes to help her.

MARGOT

What is the matter?

MS. WINSLOW

Nothing. Nothing. I'm fine. It's just a crick in my back.

MARGOT

Let me help.

Margot walks her towards her room.

MS. WINSLOW

Thank you. I want you to know you've been a big help here. I'm glad you and the girls are getting along.

MARGOT

Thank you.

Ms. Winslow disappears into her room as Ariella bursts in the front door.

ARIELLA

(Calling through the house)

Gloria!

MARGOT

She left.

ARIELLA

What do you mean left?

MARGOT

She took her bags and moved to Ithaca. She has gone to school.

ARIELLA

She's gone?

MARGOT

That is what I said.

ARIELLA

For good?

MARGOT

Yes.

ARIELLA

But- I need to talk to her.

MARGOT

You missed her by just a few minutes.

ARIELLA

When is she coming back?

MARGOT

She is not.

ARIELLA

You mean it?

MARGOT

I do.

Ariella sits down at the kitchen table.

ARIELLA

I just wanted to tell her- I wanted her to be proud of me.

MARGOT

For what?

ARIELLA

I do things she should be proud of!

MARGOT

I never said otherwise.

ARIELLA

I broke it off with Mr. Campbell.

MARGOT

That is wonderful!

ARIELLA

Isn't it? I told him if he's so desperate for love he should be nicer to his mother!

MARGOT

Oh Ariella!

ARIELLA

I've never felt more powerful in my life.

MARGOT

I am not Gloria, but I am proud of you.

Ariella considers this for a moment.

ARIELLA

Thank you.

MARGOT

How did he take it?

ARIELLA

I'm out of the show.

MARGOT

Oh Ariella...

ARIELLA

No pity. I want to earn my place on the stage because I'm undeniably talented, not because I played some sick producer's games.

MARGOT

Gloria would be so proud.

ARIELLA

Hey, do you think you could teach me how to do a German accent? You know, so I can add it to my resume.

MARGOT

I could try.

Margot picks up the physics book.

ARIELLA

I could help you with physics, maybe a little. I've had more schooling than you.

MARGOT

I would like that.

ARIELLA

How would say thank you in a German accent?

MARGOT

Thank you. The t.h. is a little more like an s.

ARIELLA

Sank you

MARGOT

Not bad. It will need a little work.

ARIELLA

(A very bad attempt at a german accent)

I am glad we are friends now.

Margot laughs.

MARGOT

I am glad too. It is a shame we all must part ways soon.

ARIELLA

Part ways? What do you mean?

MARGOT

With Gloria gone Ms. Winslow is selling the house.

ARIELLA

What?!

MARGOT

We all have to be out by the end of the month.

ARIELLA

Bridget won't let that happen.

MARGOT

She is out searching for a new girl as we speak, but Ms. Winslow has already said it will not matter.

ARIELLA

Where are you going?

MARGOT

I found a house in Flatbush.

ARIELLA

Do they have any more room?

MARGOT

I only inquired about one.

ARIELLA

Maybe I could-

MARGOT

The landlady is German. Of course you are welcome to look! I just, I thought you would not want to-

ARIELLA

As long as she's not... you know, a Nazi, I'd be happy to live there.

MARGOT

I have not met her so I cannot say, but if she is here in America I do not think she is a Nazi.

ARIELLA

Can we go visit the house? Maybe meet her?

MARGOT

Now?

ARIELLA

Why not?

MARGOT

Alright, let me get my coat.

Margot pulls on her coat and the two leave together.

In 2017 Gabriella picks up the last box in her apartment and takes one last look at the empty room, before leaving. She closes and locks the door behind her, and walks down the stairs with the final box. She walks out the front door and exits.

SCENE 9

The house is completely still and empty. In 2017 Miss Andrews walks in the front door with a hot dish in her arms. She heads up the stairs and knocks on Gabriella's door.

MISS ANDREWS

Gabriella?

There is no answer.

MISS ANDREWS

I brought a pasta bake!

Still no answer.

She takes out her keys and unlocks the door. She slowly steps into the empty room and walks the length of it.

In 1949 Bridget comes home, defeated. She steps on a letter that has been dropped through the front door. She picks it up. She tears it open. As she begins to read we hear Gloria's voice.

GLORIA (OFF)

Dear Bridge,

I hope you're doing well. I started my first week of classes. It's wonderful. There are science labs that I can go into whenever I want (I have my own key!), and my roommate and I stay up late going over theories and experiments. She's lovely, Bridge. I just know you two would get along. You should come visit soon! It's a little harder for me to get away than I thought it would be. They've loaded us up with so much work, but I promise, you're welcome any time. This was a good decision for me Bridge. I hope you're not still mad, and if you are, please forgive me. I love you with all my heart.

Yours,
Gloria

Bridget closes the letter and runs up the stairs.

BRIDGET

Margot?

No answer.

BRIDGET

Ariella?

No answer.

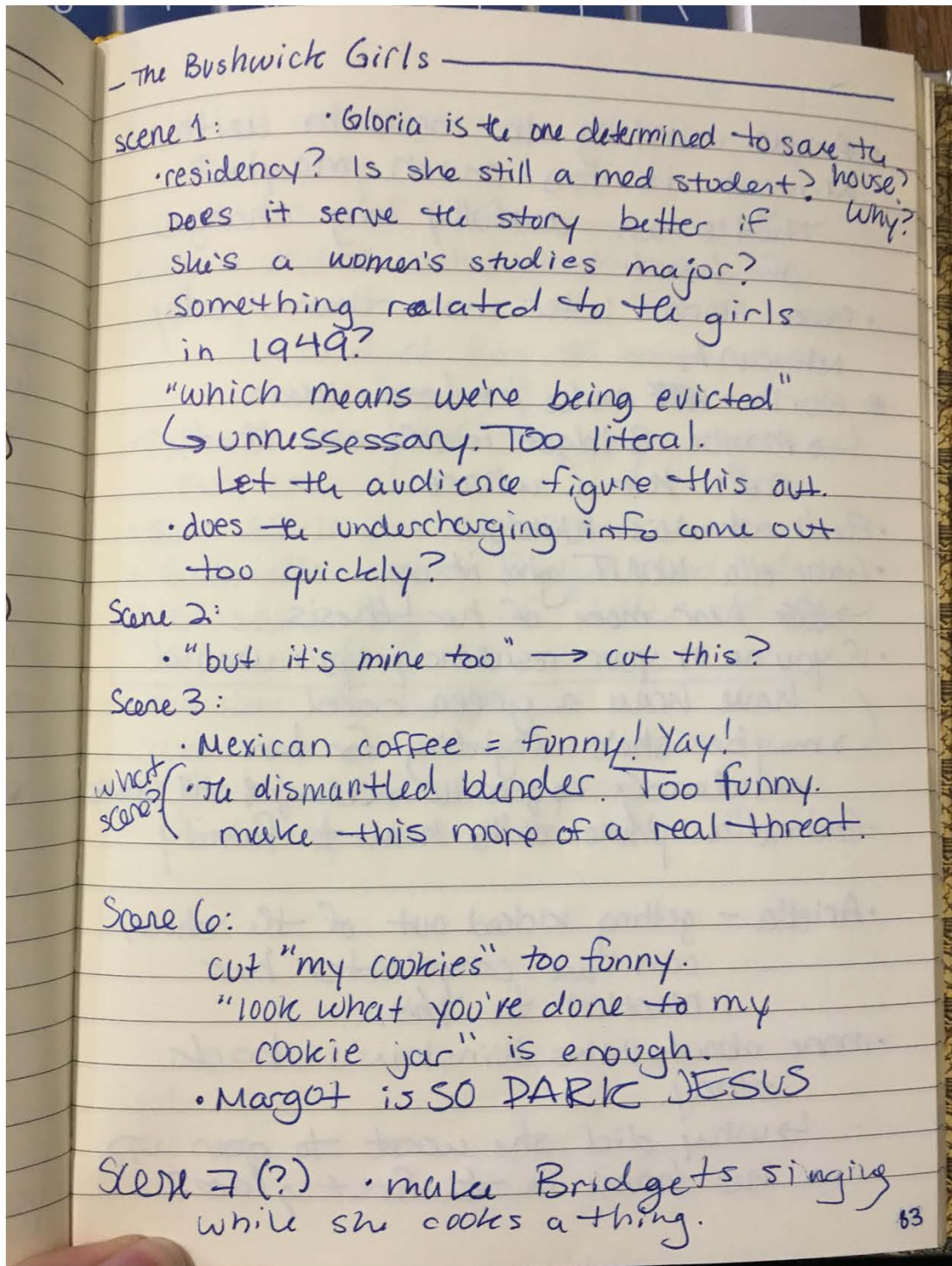
Bridget throws open their bedroom door. She surveys the bare room and steps inside.

Miss Andrews turns to face her.

END OF PLAY

Appendix D

First Reading Notes



- Ariella wanting to move in with Margot is too much maybe?
That's an awfully big change of heart.
- Make Gloria's letter more thematically relevant.
- * Gloria - ~~not~~ make her less mean.
↳ maybe Bridget is the one that calls her a whore.
- Flesh out Miss Winslow.
- Gabriella WONT give it up.
↳ ~~she~~ hear more of her thesis.
- If you're in your residency you would have had a green card
↳ maybe she's fighting for her residency. → gets the residency & still leaves
- Gabriella phone calls home to family
- Ariella - getting kicked out of the show, can we complicate her reaction to this.
- more about Miss Winslow's back story.
↳ why did she want to open up her home in the first place?

- Not all schools take people without citizenship.
 - cautious of Gloria's aggression.
 - How did the other girls get where they are?
 - Bridget has the most clear background
 - Tell the story of the proper plane earlier.
 - Give Gloria an emotionally arc
 - Gabriella gives Bridget land lady the same type of letter that Gloria does.
-

Questions for Zariya

- What are your pet peeves about the portrayal of black people in plays written by white people.

Appendix E

Notes on Discussion with Director**The Bushwick Girls (meeting with Matt 3/28)**

- Interplay between past and present: why is it necessary?
 - Mrs. Andrews IS Bridget
 - Gabriella asks Mrs. Andrews about the history of the house.
 - Gabriella is researching the house in particular.
 - More curiosity about “who lived here before us?”
- Beginning of the play feels abrupt
 - Can this happen prior to the beginning of the play?
 - Can we jump in on them mid-conversation?
- Margot and Ariella: these two don’t need to be friends.
 - What if the best they can happen is that they learn to be civil.
 - Make them meaner to each other.
 - Let Ariella’s fangs come out a little bit more.
 - let the ugliness here play out a little bit more
 - The confession to Margot could happen later in the play.
 - Margot feels like she’s holding onto a secret.
- What is the central conflict of the play?
 - Ariella and Margot are the central conflict. This is what pulls us through the play.
 - Aim all the other problems at the main problem. Don’t give them all equal weight. Maybe if they house is lost Ariella and Margot are somehow out of options.
- Ariella can be the one the does physical fighting and Gloria doesn’t or doesn’t know how to fight back.
 - The cookie jar can still get broken.
 - Ariella the instigator
 - Gloria is not a fighter

What is it about: People living in a world they feel that other people don’t have a right to.

Appendix F

Workshop Notes

The Bushwick Girls workshop day 1

- Does Tigger do anything for the story now?

Gabriella:

- "How much do you know about this house?"
↳ does this abrupt change work?
- Does the cornflower story come too out of nowhere?
- What does it mean for Gabriella that she gives up & submits a B paper?
Does she need to work harder?
- Mrs. Winslow having cancer? Does this do anything for us?
- What are the stakes for ~~her~~ Gabriella?
↳ Raise the stakes! she leaves b/c she's gotta figure something out.

Themes/

- People are not where they came from.
- Home is people, not places

Mrs Andrews

- would never do anything to get herself in trouble.
- engrained in her from her youth.
- I have to do what I have to do to survive
- She's trying to replace the family she had (the girls)
but the tenants are never enough
- no kids - husband left her

TO DO:

- make Gloria's letter more thematically relevant
- establish Mrs. Andrews treating Gabriella like family

□ Pull out 2017 scenes in one document

- cut the paper? change the paper?

what does the thesis help her uncover that drives her?

↳ does she start to put together the pieces about Mrs. Andrews

- when Mrs. Andrews starts to see Gabriella as a tenant it surprises Gabriella.

□ move Gabriella's "you gotta move out" until toward the end of the play.

- have Gabriella recognize Gloria's name b/c Gloria did something amazing.

The Bushwick Girls workshop day 2

- Does Gabriella know Mrs. Andrews has lived here for a long time, or does she learn this in the play?
- Is Mrs. Andrews popping in & out too much?
- What if ~~AB~~ Bridget gets dizzy instead of coughing in the scene of Ariella.
- Margot made fresh bread & muffins? (p. 62)
↳ is it terrible if I make it bacon?

2017: Does any time need to pass at all?
Can this just be one visit?

- 2017: p. 77: why isn't Gabriella more mad that Mrs. Andrews didn't tell her this before?
Why does Mrs. Andrews tell her now

- Add in something about Mrs. Andrews's husband's absence sooner.

- Does the cancer do anything for us?
I ~~if~~ cut the cancer

Mrs. Andrews

- why is she hesitant to give her story?
 - we need a dramatically clearer reason
- why is she so worried about breaking the law?
 - is she still illegal? ← is this the secret that she's holding
 - yes, she's not a naturalized citizen.
 - let's get a hint of that
- How do their old & young stories line up a little more?

-
- Didn't know who Angella was.

□ clarify this

- phone call: speaking in Spanish or back & forth btwn S & English.
- Did Ariella lose someone in the war?
 - a distant cousin perhaps?
 - maybe hint at this in the play

□ work on the ending

- The end is too easy for Margot. She finds a house too ~~easy~~ easily.
- The audience doesn't have to know if Ariella & Margot ever made it. ~~that~~ we don't have to know if they'll be okay.
- cut Margot "there are other houses" 139

— Bushwick Girls ————— 4/18/19 —————

- Before meal prayers
- new lines page 21, 32,
- Brenda - ~~was there~~ does that spanish feel natural? p. 37
- Sechszehn • Luftwaffe
- new bit for Ariella at the end of the cornflower argument? what did we think?
- bottom of page 77
 - consider changing "you would never"
- give them the translation for German on page 82
- Do you want to link to the leaving ~~page~~ of Liverpool song Maggie?

□ one more mention of the citizenship in the middle.

□ Fix the money → ~~today~~ 1949 \$150 ⇒ \$14.04

□ Bridget has a line about not wanting to leave the house after first rejection letter 149

— Bushwick Girls ————— 4/19/19 —————

- + Spanish quip about Mrs. Andrew's age
- + Gloria: "You would never" - It's not that big of a threat? Take a look at this.
- "Ireland isn't my home anymore.
America is your home
I'm not a citizen
You will be one day"
 · what do we think?
- "Please, you know I don't like that"
 ↳ clarify "Lord's name in vain"
- maybe harshen up the letter from Ireland
 + 1 additional thing.

Pages to Print

~~80 copies of each~~

p. 69-70

→ p. 5 in pdf

- Page 3 : 3 copies
- page 67-68 : 3 copies
- page 78 (p. 80): 5 copies
- page 112 (p. 114): 3 copies

The Bushwick Girls

by
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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	ETHNICITY
Gabriella Sánchez	Gabriella is a Dreamer. She is an undergraduate student majoring in Women and Gender Studies. She is applying for graduate schools in psychology. She wants to council women.	22	Mexican
Bridget Andrews	Gabriella's landlady in 2017. Cat lady. She believes fiercely that the law is meant to be followed always.	83	Irish American
Gloria Moore	A brilliant young woman studying very hard to become a scientist for NASA. She moved to Brooklyn for a better high school education.	17	African American
Bridget McCarthy	The oldest of a large Catholic family. She values her religion and her family. She moved to Brooklyn to provide for them.	15	Irish
Ariella Feldstein	A young actress who has recently moved out of her parents house. She values freedom, independence and ambition.	18	Jewish American
Margot Kühn	The new girl. Shy. She is trying to process the horrors of the last few years. She just wants some peace and a few friends.	16	German
Clara Winslow	The landlady in 1949. She is ready to move on to a simpler life.	60	Mayflower White

SCENE ONE.

Lights up on a second floor studio apartment in a converted Bushwick, Brooklyn townhouse. The house is old. The faded yellow walls are broken up by large cracks. One end of the room fits a mini fridge, a tiny stove, and a sink. The apartment is furnished with mismatched second hand pieces including a prominent desk and two twin beds pushed together, but it is neat and clean.

The room's tenant, GABRIELLA SÁNCHEZ, is in her tiny kitchen, pouring today's 5th cup of coffee as she talks to MRS ANDREWS, her landlady. We break in on them mid-conversation.

GABRIELLA

And my advisor told me I have to take myself out of the paper. I made it too personal. How am I supposed to make it less personal? It's about immigrants!

MRS ANDREWS

How many cups of coffee have you had today?

GABRIELLA

What? I don't know. 4 or 5. Do you want a cup?

MRS ANDREWS

decaf? If I have caffeine after five p.m. I'll be up all night.

GABRIELLA

I don't drink decaf.

MRS ANDREWS

Wooh! I don't know how you do it.

GABRIELLA

It's the only thing that keeps me going.

MRS ANDREWS

You work too hard.

GABRIELLA

Not hard enough for Angela apparently.

MRS. ANDREWS

What did she say exactly?

Gabriella takes a look at her computer, where the email is still sitting open.

GABRIELLA

“Gabriella, while I enjoy your fervor for the topic of women immigrants, this was not your thesis at the beginning of your paper. While they are certainly part of this population, it seems as if you are skewing your paper to focus solely on immigrant women, rather than on displaced people of all shapes and sizes. And while I also appreciate relating the issue to yourself, I would cut out the use of "we" in your paper entirely.” Can you believe that?

MRS. ANDREWS

Can you adjust your thesis to focus on immigrant women?

GABRIELLA

I could. It’s just a lot of work.

MRS. ANDREWS

But if that’s what you’re passionate about--

GABRIELLA

I don’t know, I just thought it was interesting. Apparently a lot of young women immigrated here in the 40s and 50s.

MRS. ANDREWS

Yes I suppose they did.

GABRIELLA

Where did you live in the 40s and 50s?

MRS ANDREWS

Around the area.

GABRIELLA

Here?

MRS ANDREWS

Yes?

GABRIELLA

Like, in Brooklyn?

MRS ANDREWS

Yes.

GABRIELLA

Wow! What was it like back then?

MRS ANDREWS

Oh, I don't know, it was different.

GABRIELLA

Oh my god, this is--

MRS. ANDREWS

Gabriella, please. Don't take the Lord's name in vain.

*

GABRIELLA

Sorry. Oh my *gosh*. This is perfect! Can I interview you?

MRS. ANDREWS

Me? Why would you want to interview me?

GABRIELLA

Well, if you lived her back then, then you'd be a primary source on what it was like!

Gabriella takes out a notebook and pen.

MRS. ANDREWS

Oh, no no. I really don't remember much.

GABRIELLA

Where you born in Brooklyn?

MRS. ANDREWS

But I thought you wanted your thesis to be about the psychological effects of immigration in general. What does Brooklyn have to do with all that?

GABRIELLA

Brooklyn is a melting pot of immigrants!

MRS ANDREWS

But it's just a specific little test group! Didn't your advisor say--

GABRIELLA

I think I need to make it *more* specific. It has to be something I care about, and apparently it can't be about me, so...

MRS. ANDREWS

Well, I'd be happy to help if I can, but I really don't think I know that much about it.

GABRIELLA

When did you move here?

MRS ANDREWS

Oh, let's see, I was quite young.

GABRIELLA

Did your parents get jobs here?

MRS ANDREWS

My parents? Oh I didn't live here with my parents, they...

GABRIELLA

They what?

MRS ANDREWS

Oh nothing, nothing. Never mind. You were asking about Brooklyn?

GABRIELLA

What was it like?

MRS. ANDREWS

It was... emptier? There was more space, more trees, fewer people. But the people who were here were... they were...

GABRIELLA

Mrs. Andrews?

The house opens up to the past: 1949 to be exact. Lights come up on another second floor bedroom, and an entire downstairs with a full kitchen and dining room. The downstairs is bustling with life.

BRIDGET is standing at the stove stirring a large pot of soup. She has a stack of papers, including the periodic table on one side and a script on the other. She toggles back and forth between study buddy and scene partner.

GLORIA is sitting at the dining room table amid a pile of paper, books, pencils, rulers, and notecards, diligently studying.

ARIELLA is pacing around the space rehearsing lines.

ARIELLA

‘What’s the matter, honey? Are you lost?’

BRIDGET

(Reading from the script)

‘They told me to take a streetcar named Desire, and then transfer to one called Cemeteries and ride six blocks and get off at Elysian Fields!’

ARIELLA

‘That’s where you are now.’

GLORIA

Bridget, elements. One more time.

BRIDGET

Mn

GLORIA

Manganese

ARIELLA

I said, ‘That’s where you are now.’

BRIDGET

Uh, ‘at Elysian Fields?’

ARIELLA

Oh gosh Bridge! Say it with some feeling!

BRIDGET

I’m trying to do three things at once.

(to Gloria)

Cd

GLORIA

Cadmium

BRIDGET

‘At Elysian Fields?’

ARIELLA

‘This here is Elysian Fields.’

BRIDGET

‘They mustn’t have- understood- what number I wanted.’

(to Gloria)

Sb

ARIELLA

What?

BRIDGET

The last part was for Gloria.

ARIELLA

Oh, uh-

GLORIA

Seaborgium?

BRIDGET

No, Antimony

GLORIA

Now that’s just plain stupid.

ARIELLA

‘What number you lookin’ for?’

GLORIA

What?

ARIELLA

That’s my line.

BRIDGET

‘Six thirty-two’

ARIELLA

‘You don’t have to look no further’

GLORIA

Do you have to rehearse that play right now?

ARIELLA

Yes I do.

Bridget gathers up three plates and three sets of silverware and takes them to the table. She tries to find a place to set them down amid Gloria's pile of papers but she's unsuccessful. She returns the stack of plates and silverware to the counter.

GLORIA

We all know you know the lines.

ARIELLA

It's not just about knowing the lines.

GLORIA

Some of us are doing real work.

BRIDGET

(Too tired for this)

Gloria...

ARIELLA

You don't think acting is real work?! I'd like to see you try it!

GLORIA

I don't get what's so hard about standing there and saying words.

ARIELLA

It's not just standing there and saying words! You have to feel things, really feel things as they happen and react like it's happening for the first time every night!

BRIDGET

Pb

GLORIA

Easy. Lead.

(to Ariella)

You're playing a landlady.

ARIELLA

What does that have to do with anything?

BRIDGET

Landlady's having feelings too.

ARIELLA

Thank you!

GLORIA

It's not a hard part.

ARIELLA

I could do a harder part but they won't let me! What I wouldn't give to play Stanley.

Ariella jumps onto the table, knocking Gloria's books.

ARIELLA

'Stella!'

GLORIA

Hey!

Gloria gathers her books indignantly.

ARIELLA

'My baby doll's left me!'

Ariella sobs dramatically and jumps down from the table.

GLORIA

Would you quit that?

Ariella runs to the phone and picks it up, putting it to her ear.

ARIELLA

'Eunice? I want my baby. Eunice! I'll keep ringin' until I talk with my baby!'

She throws the phone down.

BRIDGET

Careful!

ARIELLA

'Stell-lahhhhhh!'

Ariella falls to her knees in anguish. She lets out a final sob, and then springs back to her feet.

ARIELLA

And scene.

GLORIA

(Dryly)

Bravo.

BRIDGET

I wish you wouldn't make such a mess.

ARIELLA

Oh, I'll clean it up.

GLORIA

How about you clean it up now?

BRIDGET

It's fine, Gloria.

GLORIA

Don't let her walk all over you, Bridge. Ariella makes a mess, Ariella needs to clean the mess.

ARIELLA

Fine. Fine. Quit whining.

Ariella gathers up the papers and books she displaced, while Bridget finally finds room to set the plates on the table.

GLORIA

I still don't get what's so exciting about saying somebody else's words.

ARIELLA

You're just not creative.

GLORIA

Oh I'm creative. I create experiments and formulas and designs for rockets, you know, useful things.

ARIELLA

You mean you *want* to create experiments and formulas and designs for rockets. You haven't done any yet!

GLORIA

But I will! As soon as I get into school.

As soon as the table is set Bridget knocks on the door of the only downstairs bedroom (we do not need to see the inside of this room at any point).

BRIDGET

Dinner is ready Ms. Winslow!

Bridget returns to the stove and begins to ladle soup into three bowls.

ARIELLA

What school is going to let a woman design a rocket?

GLORIA

Cornell

A quick knock at the front door and a small pile of mail falls through the letter slot.

ARIELLA

Mail's here!

GLORIA

I've got it !

Gloria runs for the door just ahead of Ariella and picks up the stack of mail, flipping through it quickly.

ARIELLA

Give it here!

GLORIA

What are you so excited for?

ARIELLA

You never know when you'll be offered a Broadway role.

BRIDGET

I don't think it'd come to you in the mail.

ARIELLA

You never know.

Gloria finds a letter for herself in the stack. She takes it quietly and passes the stack to Ariella, who also flips through it. She finds one letter for herself and quickly tears it open, dropping the rest of the mail on the table.

BRIDGET

What is it?

ARIELLA

Oh my God.

Gloria has opened her letter and is reading it.

BRIDGET

What?

ARIELLA

Mr. Campbell is coming to see the first preview.

Ariella nudges Gloria who has been reading her letter. It didn't contain good news, but Gloria's trying not to show her disappointment.

GLORIA

Who?

ARIELLA

The producer

BRIDGET

What producer?

ARIELLA

Of Streetcar

GLORIA

Is that big?

ARIELLA

It means I have to be good. He's the one who wanted to cast me.

BRIDGET

You'll be brilliant.

ARIELLA

You're sure I don't sound too Jewish?

GLORIA

What does it matter if you sound Jewish?

ARIELLA

The big producers on Broadway don't want stars that sound too Jewish.

BRIDGET

You sound American to me.

ARIELLA

Of course I sound American to you, you're Irish.

GLORIA

You sound fine. You sound like you're from Brooklyn.

ARIELLA

So I sound Jewish.

GLORIA

No!

BRIDGET

Is there anything for me?

ARIELLA

What?

BRIDGET

In the mail?

ARIELLA

Oh, I don't know.

Bridget picks up the mail herself and goes through it. She suddenly stops. Staring at a letter.

BRIDGET

Gloria.

Gloria has returned to diligently studying and doesn't hear her.

BRIDGET

Gloria!

GLORIA

What?

BRIDGET

Did you see this?

Bridget holds up a letter with a red stamp across it.

GLORIA

What is it?

BRIDGET

A notice of repossession.

ARIELLA

Repossession of what?

BRIDGET

The house

ARIELLA

From who?

BRIDGET

The bank.

ARIELLA

But why?

BRIDGET

I don't know

GLORIA

Ms. Winslow must be behind on payments.

ARIELLA

Which one of you hasn't paid your rent?

GLORIA

Don't look at me, I've been paying.

BRIDGET

I've paid.

ARIELLA

You don't think she's stealing it do you?

GLORIA

Our rent?

Ms. Winslow's bedroom door opens and she walks out dressed in a robe and slippers. She moves slowly. The girls fall silent and watch her as she makes her way to the table.

MS. WINSLOW

Thank you for cooking tonight Bridget. It looks splendid.

BRIDGET

Don't mention it.

The girls sit down at the table. Bridget stays standing, still holding the notice.

MS. WINSLOW

Shall we say grace?

The girls bow their heads. Bridget joins Ms. Winslow in saying

MS. WINSLOW/BRIDGET

Bless us oh Lord and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Ariella joins Ms. Winslow in saying

MS. WINSLOW/ARIELLA

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, through whose word everything comes into being.

ALL

Amen.

Ms. Winslow picks up her spoon and begins to eat.
Neither Ariella nor Gloria touch their bowls. Ms.
Winslow notices.

MS. WINSLOW

What's the matter?

Gloria and Ariella look at Bridget

MS. WINSLOW

If you don't care for potato soup you could always volunteer to cook dinner yourselves.

ARIELLA

No, it's not that. The soup is lovely Bridget. Thank you.

GLORIA

Yes, thank you.

The girls both pick up their spoons and tentatively begin
to eat.

MS. WINSLOW

Classes going well, Gloria?

GLORIA

Yes ma'am.

MS. WINSLOW

Ariella, your show opens soon doesn't it?

ARIELLA

It does ma'am.

MS. WINSLOW

Bridget? Aren't you joining us?

I'm not hungry.

BRIDGET

They eat in silence a moment longer until it becomes unbearable.

MS. WINSLOW

Alright ladies. Out with it.

BRIDGET

This came for you today.

Bridget puts the letter down in front of Ms. Winslow. Ms. Winslow opens it and takes a moment to skim over it.

MS. WINSLOW

I see.

GLORIA

Is it some kind of mistake?

MS. WINSLOW

Hm? Oh no, I expect not.

GLORIA

What?

BRIDGET

What happened?

MS. WINSLOW

No need to concern yourselves.

BRIDGET

We'd like to help if we can.

MS. WINSLOW

I'm afraid that's not possible.

GLORIA

What are you going to do?

MS. WINSLOW

I suppose I'll go live with my sister.

GLORIA

What?

ARIELLA

Ms. Winslow!

BRIDGET

Where will *we* go?

MS. WINSLOW

I'm sure you'll be able to find a place.

GLORIA

You're not even going to try?

MS. WINSLOW

When you get to be my age you'll understand there comes a time when you have to let things go.

ARIELLA

I'll never find another room this price!

MS. WINSLOW

Yes, well that's why it's gone under I imagine.

BRIDGET

How do you mean?

MS. WINSLOW

Oh nothing, nothing. Eat your soup.

GLORIA

Ms. Winslow, what do you mean that's why it's gone under?

MS. WINSLOW

I've always said you girls pay as much as you can spare.

GLORIA

But we've all been paying the full twenty-five.

MS. WINSLOW

Well...

BRIDGET

What do you mean "well"? Who hasn't paid?

MS. WINSLOW

No, no you've all paid. It's just...

GLORIA

You've been undercharging us.

MS. WINSLOW

Yes.

GLORIA

We could all pay a little more, right girls? If it would help save the house?

ARIELLA

I could pinch a dollar or two.

GLORIA

Bridget?

BRIDGET

I... well, I have to send money to my family.

GLORIA

Even a few cents.

BRIDGET

I suppose I could spare a dollar... maybe.

MS. WINSLOW

Really girls. It's not worth it. It's time for me to move on anyway.

BRIDGET

But this is our home! You can't ask us to give it up.

MS. WINSLOW

It's not your house Bridget. Unless you want the responsibility of keeping it up, I suggest you mind your own business.

*

The girls fall silent.

ARIELLA

We just want to help.

MS. WINSLOW

That's very kind, but I don't want your help.

Ms. Winslow stands up.

Delicious soup Bridget.

MS. WINSLOW

Thank you.

BRIDGET

Ms. Winslow takes leave of the table and returns to her room. As soon as her door clicks shut-

BRIDGET

She can't give up the house.

GLORIA

Agreed.

ARIELLA

But what can we do?

GLORIA

Give me that letter.

Bridget hands the letter to Gloria. Gloria reads over it. Her eyes widen.

BRIDGET

What?

GLORIA

She's a hundred dollars in debt.

ARIELLA

A hundred?!

Ariella dramatically falls back into her chair.

ARIELLA

It's impossible.

GLORIA

Not impossible, just difficult.

BRIDGET

Gloria's right. There has to be a way.

ARIELLA

We barely make enough money to make ends meet, and I don't think there's a promotion in any of our near futures. It's impossible.

GLORIA

Ariella cut that out.

ARIELLA

What?

GLORIA

Your incessant negativity.

BRIDGET

She's right though. How could we do it?

GLORIA

You just said there had to be a way!

BRIDGET

But Ariella made an excellent point!

GLORIA

You're no help at all.

BRIDGET

I'm just being realistic.

GLORIA

Problems are rarely solved by realists.

ARIELLA

A hundred dollars!

BRIDGET

Impossible.

Gloria whacks Bridget with the letter.

GLORIA

I mean it.

BRIDGET

Who's got that kind of money? I certainly don't!

Gloria looks at the letter.

GLORIA

They're giving her a month to pay.

ARIELLA

A month?!

GLORIA

Shut up!

BRIDGET

What are we going to do? I can't find another place! I only ended up here because my mother's cousin's pastor knew Ms. Winslow's sister! Nobody wants to rent to you if you don't have papers!

Bridget begins to clear the dishes from the table and return the kitchen to order. This is something she can control.

GLORIA

How much do you make at the store?

BRIDGET

Ten dollars a week.

GLORIA

That's forty dollars a month. I make seventeen a week, or sixty-eight dollars a month. Ariella?

ARIELLA

It depends.

GLORIA

How much are you making now?

ARIELLA

Ten dollars a week.

GLORIA

And?

ARIELLA

And ten dollars a week from my parents.

GLORIA

So eighty dollars a month. Between the three of us that's...

She does a some quick mental math

GLORIA

One hundred and eighty-eight dollars a month.

She slams the letter down on the table in triumph.

GLORIA

It's possible.

ARIELLA

We have to eat.

BRIDGET

I have to send money to my family.

ARIELLA

Bridge, they haven't written you in a year. Maybe it's time you stop funding their lives.

BRIDGET

They need me.

ARIELLA

How would you know? You haven't heard from them!

GLORIA

Ariella!

ARIELLA

What? It's true!

GLORIA

How much do you need to send them Bridge?

BRIDGET

Fifteen a month.

ARIELLA

Fifteen?! Are you joking?

BRIDGET

The reason I came here in the first place was to send money back to them. It's not an easy time.

GLORIA

Fifteen for your family. That leaves us with one hundred and sixty-five dollars between the three of us. If we pay the bank we're left with sixty-five dollars to live off of.

ARIELLA

That's less than thirty dollars each! For a whole month!

GLORIA

It's twenty-one dollars and sixty-seven cents each.

ARIELLA

Twenty-one?! Impossible!

Ariella 'faints'

BRIDGET

We still have to pay rent or it's all for nothing.

GLORIA

Right.

BRIDGET

That's twenty five dollars each.

Ariella weeps loudly from the floor.

GLORIA

And she's been undercharging us, so rent isn't really twenty-five. It's probably more like thirty like everyplace else.

BRIDGET

We don't have enough.

GLORIA

Maybe we can make some extra money somehow.

BRIDGET

Face facts Gloria. We can't do it.

GLORIA

I am facing facts, but instead of cowering in fear I'm trying to find a way to change them.

Beat

BRIDGET

If you find a way to change the facts I'll write to the Pope for your canonization.

GLORIA

Well, you'd better get a pen and paper.

Gloria takes the letter with her and heads upstairs to her room. She closes the door behind her and sits at her desk, she takes out a paper and pencil and tries to solve the problem in every way she knows how.

Bridget starts drying dishes, humming *The Leaving of Liverpool* to herself. Ariella is still lying on the floor, but now she rolls onto her back and props herself up.

ARIELLA

I didn't mean anything by it. What I said about your family.

BRIDGET

I know.

ARIELLA

They must love you very much.

BRIDGET

I suppose so.

ARIELLA

I mean, you provide for them. I'm just a burden to my parents.

BRIDGET

That's not true. Your parents love you.

ARIELLA

They kicked me out.

BRIDGET

They send you money.

ARIELLA

It's more of a bribe really.

BRIDGET

For what?

ARIELLA

For me to behave myself, I guess.

Bridget has finished with the dishes. She pulls Ariella up from the floor.

BRIDGET

Come on. Let's go to bed.

Bridget leads Ariella up the stairs.

ARIELLA

I wish my parents lived across the ocean.

BRIDGET

No you don't.

ARIELLA

No, I s'pose not.

BRIDGET

We're a family too you know. You, me, and Gloria. One perfect, happy family.

Ariella ruffles Bridget's hair and then disappears into her room.

In 2017 Mrs. Andrews has spaced out.

GABRIELLA

Mrs. Andrews?

MRS. ANDREWS

What?

GABRIELLA

You were telling me about what Brooklyn used to be like?

MRS. ANDREWS

I'm sorry, I didn't realize it was getting so late! I need to get home.

GABRIELLA

Oh! Okay, of course.

Gabriella helps Mrs. Andrews up.

GABRIELLA

Will you come back tomorrow?

MRS. ANDREWS

I'd love to. Thank you Gabriella. Don't stay up too late now. You need your sleep.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 2

1949. The house is empty. It is late afternoon.

Bridget bursts through the front door, out of breath. She's run all the way home.

BRIDGET

Gloria!

Bridget surveys the scene and registers that Gloria is not downstairs. She takes the stairs at a run.

BRIDGET

Gloria, I've got it!

She bursts into their bedroom. Empty.

BRIDGET

Gloria?

She turns to Ariella's room and throws open the door. Empty.

BRIDGET

Where is everybody?

She heads back down the stairs. The front door starts to open, she hears it, she takes the rest of the steps two at a time. She hits the bottom of the stairs as Gloria enters.

BRIDGET

Where have you been?!

Upstairs in 2017 Gabriella enters with her backpack. She makes herself a cup of coffee, sits down at her desk, and begins to work on her thesis.

GLORIA
School. Has the mail come?

BRIDGET
It's on the table.

Gloria rushes to the table and picks up the mail.
Gloria.

Gloria looks up. Bridget is grinning at her incessantly.

GLORIA
What's wrong with you?

BRIDGET
Absolutely nothing!

GLORIA
Then why are you grinning like that?

BRIDGET
I figured it out!

GLORIA
Figured what out?

BRIDGET
How to save the house!

Gloria sets down the mail.

GLORIA
I'm listening.

BRIDGET
We take on another tenant! She can stay in Ariella's room! If we have a forth tenant all our rents will be lower and we'll-

GLORIA
Not that much lower Bridge...

BRIDGET
But if she's willing to chip in extra to save the house-

GLORIA
Why would the new girl be willing to pay to save a house she hasn't lived in yet?

BRIDGET

I already found somebody, and she'll do it, I can tell you.

GLORIA

You already found somebody without talking to us?

BRIDGET

She works with me, and she's incredibly sweet, and she doesn't have anywhere to go!
She's been sleeping in the store room.

GLORIA

Jesus Mary and Joseph.

BRIDGET

Gloria, you know I--

GLORIA

It wasn't in vane. I was praying.

She does a quick sign of the cross. Bridget rolls her eyes.

BRIDGET

The point is she's desperate.

GLORIA

Does she have money?

BRIDGET

She makes the same as me.

GLORIA

Alright fine.

Gloria picks up the mail and starts flipping through it.

BRIDGET

What are you expecting?

GLORIA

Nothing

BRIDGET

Not nothing. You've been going after the mail like a dog after steak all week.

Gloria finds a letter with her name on it.

BRIDGET

(off of Gloria's reaction)

Definitely not nothing.

GLORIA

I don't want you to make it a big deal.

BRIDGET

I won't. Promise.

GLORIA

And you can't tell Ariella.

BRIDGET

Cross my heart and hope to die.

GLORIA

I applied to universities this year.

Bridget jumps up and goes to hug her.

BRIDGET

Oh Gloria that's wonder-

GLORIA

Ah ah ah! Stop! It's not a big deal.

BRIDGET

If you say so.

Bridget sits down.

BRIDGET

But it's very exciting.

GLORIA

Yeah. It is.

Gloria is staring at the letter, but not opening it.

BRIDGET

Is that your first response?

GLORIA

Second

BRIDGET

What was the first one?

GLORIA

Doesn't matter. They said no.

BRIDGET

Where's this one?

GLORIA

Jefferson Medical College

BRIDGET

Where's that?

GLORIA

Philadelphia

BRIDGET

Phile- why would you want to go there?!

GLORIA

I don't really. I just applied everywhere I could. I want to make sure I get in somewhere.

BRIDGET

Don't go to Philadelphia. That's a world away.

GLORIA

Don't flip your lid! I might not even be accepted.

BRIDGET

Don't be ridiculous. Any university would be lucky to have you.

GLORIA

Bridge. You're always saying be realistic, the odds are stacked against me in case you haven't noticed. It'll be a fight to get in anywhere.

BRIDGET

But you're so smart they can't possibly deny you!

Gloria shrugs.

BRIDGET

Well, open it! Let's see who's right!

Gloria tears it open and pulls out a letter.

BRIDGET

What's it say?

GLORIA

We regret to inform you blah blah blah.

BRIDGET

Oh Gloria!

In 2017 there's a knock at the door. Gabriella goes to answer it.

GLORIA

No don't. Please.

BRIDGET

It's their loss.

2017: Gabriella answers the door. It's Mrs. Andrews. She immediately ushers Mrs. Andrews inside.

GABRIELLA

How much do you know about this house specifically?

MRS ANDREWS

What?

GABRIELLA

I'm so glad you're here. I've been slipping down this research rabbit hole. Apparently Bushwick was a center for immigrant women. There were lots of boarding houses here for them and I've been trying to find out if there's any chance this was one. Do you know how long it's been here?

MRS ANDREWS

Oh goodness. I believe it was built at the turn of the century. 1890-something, I believe.

GABRIELLA

How long have you owned the building?

MRS ANDREWS

Oh, I didn't buy it until 1982.

GABRIELLA

What was it when you bought it?

MRS ANDREWS

An artists haven of some sort.

GABRIELLA

And you turned it into apartments?

MRS ANDREWS

Yes, I did.

GABRIELLA

Do you know anything about it back in the 40s?

MRS ANDREWS

Goodness, that was an awfully long time ago.

GABRIELLA

It's okay if you don't remember I just thought--

MRS ANDREWS

I really don't know. I'd have to look into it.

GABRIELLA

That's okay, I just thought maybe you'd know.

In 1949: Ms. Winslow opens the front door. Gloria slaps on a smile and tucks the letter into her skirt.

BRIDGET

Afternoon, Ms. Winslow

MS. WINSLOW

Hello ladies.

Ms. Winslow walks past them toward her bedroom.

BRIDGET

Ms. Winslow we found a way to save the house.

GLORIA

Bridget found a way to save the house.

Ms. Winslow sighs.

MS. WINSLOW

Girls, I don't want to save the house-

BRIDGET

But-

MS. WINSLOW

It's time for me to move on.

BRIDGET

We depend on this house! This is our home.

MS. WINSLOW

You can find another-

GLORIA

We don't want to find another place.

MS. WINSLOW

I'm sorry girls, but I'm too old for this.

BRIDGET

You're not too old for it. You just aren't trying!

MS. WINSLOW

You don't own this house Bridget. Don't tell me how to run it.

BRIDGET

We're offering you a solution!

GLORIA

Bridge doesn't mean anything by it. She just loves this house. And you! We both love you too.

MS. WINSLOW

You'll find another house with another landlady who you love and who loves you.

BRIDGET

I moved three thousand miles away from my family with nothing but a tiny suitcase, and this house, these girls are my whole life in America, and I will fight tooth and nail before I loose them.

Bridget waits for Ms. Winslow to respond. Ms. Winslow sighs.

MS. WINSLOW

Alright. What's your solution?

BRIDGET

A forth tenant.

MS. WINSLOW

Where will she sleep?

BRIDGET

Ariella's room.

MS. WINSLOW

Have you spoken to Ariella about this?

BRIDGET

(without hesitation)

Yes.

MS. WINSLOW

How does that solve the problem of the debt?

BRIDGET

We're going to pay it.

MS. WINSLOW

You?

GLORIA

I did the math. We can do it.

MS. WINSLOW

Girls, you can't pay my debt.

BRIDGET

Yes we can, and we're going to, and in return you're going to keep the house.

MS. WINSLOW

It seems you have it all figured out.

BRIDGET

Yes mum.

MS. WINSLOW

What's the new girl's name?

BRIDGET

Margot. She's very kind and very shy. She won't cause any trouble.

MS. WINSLOW

When do you expect her to move in?

BRIDGET

Tomorrow.

MS. WINSLOW

If she pays rent and does her share of housework I suppose I can't object.

BRIDGET

Oh thank you thank you thank you!

MS. WINSLOW

This doesn't mean I'm keeping the house.

BRIDGET

But if we pay your debt-

MS. WINSLOW

I'll think about it Bridget.

BRIDGET

Thank you.

Ms. Winslow disappears into her room, closing the door behind her.

Bridget jumps up and down.

BRIDGET

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Gloria laughs

GLORIA

Calm down!

BRIDGET

We can stay! We can stay!

Bridget hugs Gloria. Gloria is taken a little off-guard but hugs her back.

In 2017:

MRS ANDREWS

Gabriella, I was watching the news this morning and all this talk of DACA I realized I never asked... are you in danger of, well, is your permit going to expire after your graduation?

Gabriella is taken aback.

GABRIELLA

Well, I mean, technically yes, it's going to expire in May.

MRS ANDREWS

Do you... do you know what you're going to do next?

GABRIELLA

Next?

MRS ANDREWS

After graduation?

GABRIELLA

I was planning on staying here until grad school.

MRS ANDREWS

Here?

GABRIELLA

Yes? Is that okay?

MRS ANDREWS

What? Yes. Of course. Yes.

GABRIELLA

Okay...?

MRS ANDREWS

Sorry, I, um, I left the oven on, so I need to get back.

GABRIELLA

Oh! Of course! Sorry to keep you.

MRS ANDREWS

That's alright dear. Have a good night.

Mrs. Andrews lets herself out.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 3

Upstairs in 2017 Gabriella sits at her desk. She's in the middle of a phone call with her mom.

GABRIELLA

No, ya sé, solo queria checar. No lo había pensado hasta que la Señora Andrews pregunto-
-

Pause.

GABRIELLA

No. Mama- mama! Ya sé! I was ignoring el problema. I know--

Pause.

GABRIELLA

Can you just- is there anything I need to do or does it just expire and I ignore it?

Pause.

GABRIELLA

¿Y qué pasa con grad school? Will I still be able to get in without the permit?

Pause.

GABRIELLA

OK gracias. No, no. Estoy segura que va estar bien.

Pause

GABRIELLA

The thesis is going really well actually. I found out there were all kinds of immigrant women living right here in Bushwick, so I'm just trying to get my hands on some more specific stories. Mrs. Andrews has been helping, but she's getting up there in age. I wonder if she really remembers much.

Pause.

GABRIELLA

Immigrants from all over! Ireland, Germany, Italy, Poland. It must have been crazy to have so many first generation immigrants from different cultures in one house.

The lights come on downstairs, in the past, as Bridget comes in the front door, a shy Margot tailing behind her. Ms. Winslow is waiting for them in the kitchen.

Ariella walks into her room (the same room that belongs to Gabriella in 2017), and lies on her bed, her nose in a script and a pencil tucked behind her ear.

GABRIELLA

Sí, ya sé.

MS. WINSLOW

You must be Margot, I'm Ms. Winslow.

Margot curtsies. Ms. Winslow waits a moment for a spoken response but there is none.

MS. WINSLOW

Alright, follow me please.

GABRIELLA

Sí, sí, por supuesto. ¡También te amo! Adiós mamá!

Gabriella hangs up, and begins working on her paper.

Margot follows Ms. Winslow

MS. WINSLOW

Rent will be twenty-five a month-

BRIDGET

Thirty. Gloria says it should be thirty. For everybody.

Ms. Winslow sighs.

MS. WINSLOW

Thirty dollars a month unless you can't afford it. This is the kitchen. Bridget is kind enough to cook most evenings, but you are responsible for buying your own food. Dishes must be done immediately after eating. I will not have mice in my house.

Ms. Winslow walks towards the stairs.

MS. WINSLOW

This is the door to my room. You may knock if you need me, but you may never open it.

She begins to walk up the stairs.

MS. WINSLOW

The bedrooms are both upstairs. The bathroom is down the hall. You will be sharing a room with Ariella. She's very loud. An actress. Don't complain to me if she bothers you.

They stop outside Ariella's room.

MS. WINSLOW

Any questions?

Margot shakes her head.

MS. WINSLOW

Quiet little thing, aren't you?

Ms. Winslow knocks on Ariella's door.

ARIELLA

(distractedly)

Come in.

Ms. Winslow opens the door.

MS. WINSLOW

Your new roommate has arrived.

ARIELLA

Who?

MS. WINSLOW

Margot

ARIELLA

What?

MS. WINSLOW

Bridget said she told you.

ARIELLA

Bridget didn't tell me anything.

MS. WINSLOW

Well, take it up with her if this is a problem.

ARIELLA

No problem per se. Hi Margot.

Margot gives a little wave.

ARIELLA

Don't be shy. Come on in.

MS. WINSLOW

I'll leave you to it.

Ms. Winslow exits, and Margot enters.

ARIELLA

We can pull the beds apart and you can have this one.

Margot just looks at her.

ARIELLA

You can put your things down.

Margot sets her things on the foot of the bed and sits herself next to them.

ARIELLA

Do you talk?

Margot nods

ARIELLA

Well say something then. I don't bite. How old are you?

MARGOT

(Mumbles so it could be mistaken for
'sixteen')

Sechszehn.

ARIELLA

She speaks! Where are you from?

Margot shakes her head.

ARIELLA

Come on. Speak up.

MARGOT

East Berlin.

The smile falls off Ariella's face.

ARIELLA

Germany?

Margot nods.

ARIELLA

You're German?

Margot nods.

Ariella storms out the door.

ARIELLA

Ms. Winslow! Ms. Winslow, is this some kind of joke?

MS. WINSLOW

I told you. Take it up with Bridget!

Ms. Winslow escapes into her room.

ARIELLA

(Practically shrieking)

Bridget!

Bridget comes running out of her room, alarmed.

BRIDGET

What's wrong?

Ariella storms back up the stairs.

ARIELLA

You shackled me up with a german!

BRIDGET

What?

ARIELLA

Don't "what" me! There's a nazi sitting on my bed!

Realization dawns on Bridget's face.

BRIDGET

Oh, Ariella, I'm sorry. I didn't think-

ARIELLA

You can say that again.

BRIDGET

She's really very sweet. She's not a nazi at all!

ARIELLA

How would you know? She barely speaks!

BRIDGET

She's been working at the store with me for two weeks. She's been nothing but kind.

ARIELLA

And german.

BRIDGET

That doesn't mean she's a nazi.

ARIELLA

I don't want her in my room.

BRIDGET

And she does speak! You just have to give her some time. She's very shy.

ARIELLA

I don't want to give her time. I want her out.

BRIDGET

But-

ARIELLA

Out Bridget! I mean it!

BRIDGET

Give her a week.

ARIELLA

No.

BRIDGET

Please! Without her we can't save the house.

ARIELLA

Find someone else.

BRIDGET

She needs a place to stay! She's been sleeping in the storeroom.

ARIELLA

In her country my relatives slept in worse conditions.

Beat.

BRIDGET

She's not her country.

ARIELLA

I'm not comfortable living with her.

BRIDGET

She deserves a chance. You can't condemn her because of where she comes from.

ARIELLA

I don't owe her anything.

BRIDGET

Ariella, please. There aren't many places that will rent to her because she's not a citizen. I should know.

ARIELLA

That's not my problem.

BRIDGET

I'll make you breakfast every morning for as long as she's here.

ARIELLA

Breakfast won't change my mind.

BRIDGET

I'll make chicken soup with matzah balls for dinner.

Ariella mulls this over for a moment.

ARIELLA

And rugelach for dessert.

BRIDGET

Deal.

ARIELLA

One week.

BRIDGET

One week.

Ariella heads back up the stairs.

BRIDGET

(under her breath)

At least.

Ariella walks back into her room. Startling Margot who is changing into her nightdress.

ARIELLA

Looks like you're staying. For now.

Margot just stands there watching her.

ARIELLA

Just keep your stuff on that side of the room.

Ariella sits back on her bed and picks up her script, still watching Margot out of the corner of her eye. Margot puts her suitcase under her bed and climbs under the covers.

ARIELLA

I want you to know that I think what you did is unforgivable, and I don't trust you one bit.

Margot just rolls away from Ariella and pulls the blankets over her head. Ariella turns out the lights.

Gabriella's face is just illuminated by her computer screen now. She can't concentrate on the paper anymore. Her mind is preoccupied by thoughts of her expiring permit. She closes the computer.

DARKNESS.

SCENE 4

Lights up on Bridget and Gloria's room. Bridget is penning a letter at her desk. She doesn't look so good. Gloria is lying on her bed studying, as usual. Ariella bursts in their door without knocking carrying three dresses.

ARIELLA

I can't live with her anymore. I did the week. The week is up. I want her out.

Gloria groans loudly and gets up. She collects her books from her bed and storms out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

ARIELLA

What's the matter with her?

BRIDGET

Why all the dresses?

ARIELLA

Get this! Mr. Campbell loved my performance so much he wants to have dinner with me tonight!

BRIDGET

That's wonderful!

ARIELLA

Isn't it? I bet he wants me to audition for another of his shows. Anyways, I have to look my very best. Sophisticated, and glamorous and ready for anything.

BRIDGET

You always look that way.

ARIELLA

(Swatting Bridget)

Fat-head.

Lights up on Ariella and Margot's room as Gloria enters. Margot is sitting on her bed pouring over a letter. When Gloria enters she jumps a little and folds up the letter quickly.

GLORIA

Hi. Mind if I study in here? Ariella invaded my room.

MARGOT

No.

GLORIA

What are you reading?

MARGOT

Nothing.

GLORIA

Can I give you a piece of advice?

Margot gives a small nod.

GLORIA

If you open up to us a little than we won't be so suspicious of you. At least, I won't.

MARGOT

There is no need to be suspicious.

GLORIA

That's what a murderer would say.

MARGOT

I am not a murderer.

GLORIA

I'm not saying you are. I'm just saying that's a terrible argument.

MARGOT

It does not matter what I say. Ariella already-

GLORIA

Just be nice to her. She'll come around.

MARGOT

She has already decided she hates me.

GLORIA

Sometimes you gotta be nice to the people who hate you just to show them they hate for no good reason.

Margot looks away.

GLORIA

You know, when I first got here Bridget and Ariella didn't like me too much either. I thought for sure they were looking for every reason to get rid of me. One day I thought I'd try something fun to win them over a bit, so I decided to do a little science experiment. I was going to make a little rocket using baking soda and vinegar and shoot it off on the sidewalk. Well, when they got home I was still working on the rocket in the kitchen and Ariella was in a terrible mood and refused to go outside so I just mixed it up right there in the kitchen and it shot up into the ceiling, poking a hole in it and spraying vinegar everywhere. I thought they were going to kill me. There was this awful moment of silence, and then Ariella started laughing so hard she fell down and Bridget had tears streaming down her face. Well, when Ms. Winslow came home she was furious. She demanded to know who had done it. Of course, she had to know it was me, but Bridget and Ariella both claimed they'd done it, and they refused to back down. She made them pay to fix the ceiling, and no matter how hard I tried they wouldn't let me pay them back. Ariella said she had never laughed so hard in her life. I'd given her a gift or something stupid like that. We've been friends ever since. Do you see what I'm trying to say?

MARGOT

Don't set off a rocket inside?

GLORIA

No! I'm telling you to set off the rocket!

MARGOT

But you broke the ceiling.

GLORIA

I'm telling you to break the ceiling!

MARGOT

I do not understand.

Forget it.

GLORIA

Gloria begins to study. Margot returns to her letter.

Ariella holds up the three dresses.

ARIELLA

Which one do you think?

BRIDGET

Hold them up one at a time.

ARIELLA

I want Margot out, Bridge. I don't trust her.

BRIDGET

Have you even talked to her?

ARIELLA

Sure I've talked to her.

Ariella holds up the red dress.

ARIELLA

A little too sexy maybe?

BRIDGET

I suppose.

Bridget stumbles a little and falls on her bed.

ARIELLA

Are you okay?

BRIDGET

Fine. Just a little light headed.

Ariella holds up the blue dress.

ARIELLA

Too frilly?

BRIDGET

I don't think so.

ARIELLA

You have to see it on.

Ariella puts on the dress.

BRIDGET

I don't believe you've talked to her.

ARIELLA

I've talked to her.

BRIDGET

About what?

ARIELLA

About how I don't trust her one bit.

BRIDGET

A conversation the likes of that isn't a conversation at all. It's like you're just a radio announcer talking at her. Even if she said something back you wouldn't hear.

ARIELLA

Why should I listen to her?

Ariella has gotten the dress on.

ARIELLA

Zip me up.

Bridget obliges.

BRIDGET

Because she might have something worth saying.

ARIELLA

What do you think?

BRIDGET

I think it's lovely. And I think you should talk to her.

ARIELLA

It's too frilly. Have *you* talked to her?

Ariella takes off the blue dress with Bridget's help.

BRIDGET

Yes.

ARIELLA

Has she said anything worth saying?

BRIDGET

She hasn't said anything hateful.

ARIELLA

To you she hasn't.

BRIDGET

And she hasn't said anything hateful to you either.

ARIELLA

How would you know?

BRIDGET

What has she said?

ARIELLA

Well... nothing yet.

BRIDGET

Give her a chance. She's clearly hurting.

ARIELLA

She deserves it.

BRIDGET

As far as we know she didn't do anyone harm.

ARIELLA

As far as we know she didn't help anyone either.

Gloria has set herself up at Ariella's desk (also Gabriella's desk). Margot has gone back to reading her letter on the bed.

MARGOT

It is a letter from my mother.

What is?

GLORIA

The letter I am reading.

MARGOT

Oh. Is she still in Germany?

GLORIA

Ja.

MARGOT

Why didn't she come with you?

GLORIA

It was not easy to leave East Berlin. She worked very hard and spent too much money to get me out.

MARGOT

I'm sorry. I'm sure you miss her.

GLORIA

I do. Very much.

MARGOT

What about your father?

GLORIA

He died.

MARGOT

Oh, I'm sorry.

GLORIA

Danke.

MARGOT

I don't speak German.

GLORIA

It means thank you.

MARGOT

GLORIA

Oh, how do you say you're welcome?

MARGOT

Bitte.

GLORIA

Bitte.

Ariella has put on the green dress.

ARIELLA

Do we have a winner?

BRIDGET

Why don't you ask Margot?

ARIELLA

You must be joking.

BRIDGET

You don't even like my taste in clothes!

ARIELLA

I respect your taste, but I also know I hate the blue dress.

BRIDGET

Well if you're never going to wear it why do you keep it?

ARIELLA

Because I only have three nice dresses! I might need it to audition for the role of little bo-peep someday.

BRIDGET

But someone else could get more use out of it.

ARIELLA

Bridge, if you want to borrow it just ask.

BRIDGET

I wasn't fishing for a handout.

ARIELLA

I'm not giving you and handout, I'm just saying you can borrow it.

Right. Okay, thank you.

BRIDGET

So the green dress?

ARIELLA

I told you, ask Margot.

BRIDGET

I'm wearing the green dress.

ARIELLA

Fine.

BRIDGET

It needs a necklace though right? Don't you think?

ARIELLA

Definitely.

BRIDGET

Do you have one?

ARIELLA

What do you think?

BRIDGET

I just thought I'd ask.

ARIELLA

Margot has one.

BRIDGET

Don't try that with me. I'm not falling for it.

ARIELLA

She does! I've seen it!

BRIDGET

I don't believe you.

ARIELLA

It was her mothers I think. A string of pearls.

BRIDGET

Ariella looks in the mirror and touches her bare décolletage thoughtfully.

BRIDGET

It would look perfect.

Ariella is considering it, but she changes her mind.

ARIELLA

My locket will do the trick.

Ariella gathers up her other dresses.

ARIELLA

Get some rest. You look wretched.

BRIDGET

Thanks very much.

Ariella leaves Bridget's room and heads to her own,

GLORIA

Why did you come to Brooklyn?

MARGOT

Why did you?

GLORIA

For a better education.

MARGOT

I came to survive.

Ariella pauses outside the door when she hears Gloria and Margot talking. She listens in.

GLORIA

But, you're so... I mean, you have blonde hair and--

MARGOT

That makes it worse in East Berlin. The Soviet soldiers are not kind.

GLORIA

I thought West Berlin was the problem.

MARGOT

West Berlin is America's problem. East Berlin is our problem. The Soviet's police our streets, and they take. Whatever they want. Whomever they want.

Ariella enters.

ARIELLA

What are you studying now, Gloria? Poetic justice?

Margot busies herself with her letter, refusing to look at Ariella.

GLORIA

Nice dress.

ARIELLA

You think so?

GLORIA

I need to study.

Gloria gathers her things and heads to the door. Ariella gets her locket out of her jewelry box and puts it on. Gloria turns back to Margot.

GLORIA

Maybe you could teach me a little German.

MARGOT

I do not think I am a very good teacher.

GLORIA

I'm a very good student.

MARGOT

I can try.

GLORIA

Killer diller.

Gloria leaves, going back to her room.

2017: There is a knock at her door. Gabriella goes to answer it. Mrs. Andrews is on the other side holding a little gift bag.

MRS ANDREWS

Evening. How's the thesis going?

GABRIELLA

It's good! Um, I bought some tea for you if you want a cup.

MRS ANDREWS

Oh! That's so kind, yes that would be lovely.

Gabriella starts preparing tea for Mrs. Andrews.

(Holding up the bag in her hand)

MRS ANDREWS

Oh, I brought you a little something to help you focus.

GABRIELLA

You didn't have to do that.

MRS ANDREWS

I wanted to.

GABRIELLA

Well, thank you.

Gabriella takes the bag.

GABRIELLA

Should I open it now, or-

MRS ANDREWS

Yes, yes please.

Gabriella opens it. It's a large bag of coffee.

GABRIELLA

Oh, thank you! A girl can never have enough coffee.

MRS ANDREWS

There's more!

GABRIELLA

Oh!

Gabriella reaches back into the bag and pulls out a tin of cinnamon sticks and a jar of sugar.

GABRIELLA

Wow, cinnamon and sugar. Thanks.

MRS ANDREWS

It's for Mexican coffee! I read that you make it with cinnamon and sugar brewed right in. It sounds delicious.

GABRIELLA

I've never tried it that way before.

MRS ANDREWS

Oh, you haven't?

GABRIELLA

No, but thank you! I'll try it.

MRS ANDREWS

I just thought that since-

GABRIELLA

I haven't been to Mexico since I was eight.

MRS ANDREWS

Right. Duh! Silly me. Gosh I'm so embarrassed.

GABRIELLA

Don't be. It was a nice thought. Thank you.

MRS ANDREWS

You're welcome. Oh, I also brought you this.

Mrs. Andrews takes out a piece of paper.

MRS ANDREWS

It's an old lease for this place. 1949 I believe.

GABRIELLA

This is amazing! Where did you find this?

MRS ANDREWS

Just in some old things.

GABRIELLA

This was in the house when you bought it?

MRS ANDREWS

What? Oh, yes, I suppose it was.

GABRIELLA

Were there any others? I'd love to take a look at the things you found here, if you don't mind.

MRS ANDREWS

Actually, there isn't anything. That's it really.

GABRIELLA

Just this lease?

MRS ANDREWS

Just about.

GABRIELLA

What else?

MRS ANDREWS

Oh, bits and bobs. Nothing significant. I threw most of it away.

GABRIELLA

Well if there's anything--

MRS ANDREWS

I'll have a look. If there's anything else that would be useful I'll bring it over.

The kettle whistles, and Gabriella pours the boiling water into a cup with a tea bag.

GABRIELLA

Do you know anything about this Bridget McCarthy?

Mrs. Andrews shakes her head.

MRS ANDREWS

She sounds Irish.

GABRIELLA

Well, a last name doesn't mean she's directly from Ireland. She could have been born here.

MRS ANDREWS

I don't believe she was.

GABRIELLA

Do you have more information on her?

MRS ANDREWS

No, I'm sorry, no, I don't.

GABRIELLA

Then I don't really think it's fair of you to assume--

MRS ANDREWS

Good luck with the paper.

Mrs. Andrews turns abruptly and lets herself out.

GABRIELLA

Wait, you didn't even drink your-- Goodnight!

Gabriella looks at the cinnamon and sugar and laughs. She begins to brew more coffee, adding the cinnamon and sugar into the mix.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 5

The next morning Margot is downstairs in the kitchen preparing breakfast.

Bridget and Gloria are in their room. Bridget is tucked into bed with the blankets pulled up to her chin. Gloria is sitting at the foot of her bed, doting on her.

In 2017, Gabriella is sitting at her desk with a steaming cup of coffee, working on her thesis.

Ariella, wrapped in her robe, comes down the stairs with an unusual quietness.

Bridge can I talk to you for-

ARIELLA

Margot turns around, and Ariella realizes she's made a mistake.

Where's Bridget?

ARIELLA

Still sleeping I think.

MARGOT

Ariella heads back up the stairs. She opens Bridget's door without knocking. Gloria shoots up from where she sits and backs Ariella out of the room as quietly as possible.

Out out out.

GLORIA

I need to talk to Bridget.

ARIELLA

She's sleeping.

GLORIA

It's important.

ARIELLA

She's sick, Ariella. Whatever you have to tell her can wait.

GLORIA

I need to-

ARIELLA

Out!

GLORIA

Gloria closes the door in her face. Ariella wraps her robe more tightly around herself and walks back down the stairs to the kitchen.

Meanwhile, Gloria sits back down on Bridget's bed.

What hurts?

GLORIA

BRIDGET

My stomach. My head.

GLORIA

Would you like me to get you anything? Water maybe?

Downstairs:

MARGOT

Would you like an egg?

Ariella brushes past her without responding and begins preparing her own breakfast, placing a pan on the stove and grabbing an egg from the carton.

Upstairs:

BRIDGET

Has the mail come yet?

GLORIA

It's a little early.

BRIDGET

Was there anything for me in yesterday's?

GLORIA

I didn't see yesterday's mail. I think Margot brought it in.

BRIDGET

Would you check?

GLORIA

What are you looking for?

BRIDGET

Anything from home.

GLORIA

Okay, rest your eyes for a minute.

Gloria leaves quietly and heads downstairs.

Margot takes her own breakfast to the table.

MARGOT

I am a good listener, if you need to talk.

Ariella cracks her egg into the pan.

Gloria enters the kitchen as Margot is leaving (for the bathroom).

MARGOT

(in passing)

Guten Morgen!

GLORIA

Morning. Have you seen the mail?

MARGOT

On the table.

Margot heads up the stairs. She goes into the bathroom.

Gloria goes to the sink and wets a clean washcloth. She then grabs the mail from the table and heads back towards the stairs flipping through it. She freezes.

The toilet upstairs flushes.

Gloria tears open an envelope and pours over the contents. She sits down on the stairs, overwhelmed.

Margot returns from the bathroom and begins to walk back down the stair. When she sees Gloria-

MARGOT

Is everything okay?

GLORIA

Hm? Oh yes. Yes everything is fine.

MARGOT

Oh, you look-

GLORIA

Can you keep a secret?

MARGOT

Yes

GLORIA

You have to promise not to tell the others.

MARGOT

Of course. I promise.

GLORIA

I mean it. Cross your heart and hope to die.

MARGOT

What?!

GLORIA

It's an oath, kind of. 'Cross my heart and hope to die. Stick a needle in my eye.' It just means you promise.

MARGOT

And Americans think Germans are dark...

GLORIA

Just say it.

MARGOT

Cross my heart and hope to die.

GLORIA

Okay.

She hands Margot the letter.

GLORIA

(Barely containing her excitement)

I got accepted into Cornell's mathematics program.

MARGOT

Oh Wunderbar! Congratulations!

GLORIA

Shhh! Not so loud!

MARGOT

This is so exciting! Why is it a secret?

GLORIA

I don't want to upset anyone.

MARGOT

Why would they be upset?

GLORIA

Because I would have to leave. If I enroll.

MARGOT

Of course you are going to enroll! They have offered you a scholarship!

GLORIA

It's a big decision.

MARGOT

Do not turn stupid now.

Gloria hugs her and fairly quickly lets go.

GLORIA

Not a word.

MARGOT

Cross my heart and hope to die.

Margot heads down the stairs back to the kitchen where she finds Ariella putting her egg on a plate.

Gloria bounds up the stairs to Bridget's room. She pauses outside the door to calm herself down.

Margot and Ariella both sit down at the kitchen table, but as far from each other as possible. Margot begins to eat her breakfast.

MARGOT

I made fresh bread. You are welcome to have a slice if you'd like.

ARIELLA

(snapping at her)

No I would not like. Shove off!

MARGOT

I only try to be helpful.

ARIELLA

Well quit it.

MARGOT

I am sorry you hate me. I am sorry to be here. I do not want to be here at all but there is nothing either you or I can do about it, so please, can we be kind?

Nothing from Ariella

MARGOT

I am not a monster. I have never killed anybody.

ARIELLA

Congratulations.

Beat

MARGOT

I found my father's body.

Silence from Ariella.

MARGOT

When he saw pictures of the camps for the first time he came home, he took his pistol outside into the garden and he shot himself among the cornflowers. Do you know the story about the cornflowers?

Silence

MARGOT

Queen Louise of Prussia was running from Napoleon, and to protect her children, she hid them in a field of cornflowers and wove beautiful purple crowns to keep them quiet. Every girl in Berlin is supposed to be like Queen Louise. The picture of motherhood.

Beat

MARGOT

She died young. The French occupation drove her to her grave. The cornflower became a national symbol. Our soldiers wear it to remind them what they are fighting for. When my father wore it I thought it meant he was fighting for me. Now, I think it meant he was fighting for his country, and his country betrayed him. So he turned the cornflowers red with his own blood.

ARIELLA

How do you know he didn't kill himself because he knew the world was going to punish him for what he did?

MARGOT

My father was in the Luftwaffe. He never fought on the ground. He never saw the camps.

ARIELLA

But he knew about them.

MARGOT

Even if he did know, how can you say you would have done different? Was he supposed to commit treason? He would have been killed and we would have been killed along with him.

ARIELLA

He should have done something. Everyone should have been doing something.

MARGOT

I am sorry.

ARIELLA

Stop saying that.

Margot falls silent.

ARIELLA

Last I heard my grandparents were at Neuengamme. The camp's records were destroyed, so I might never know what happened to them. At least you got to see your father's body.

Upstairs:

GLORIA

I brought you a damp cloth for you head.

Gloria places the cloth on Bridget's forehead

BRIDGET

Is there any mail for me?

Gloria had forgotten about the original reason she fetched the mail.

GLORIA

Um-

She quickly flips through the stack.

GLORIA

Yes! Here.

Bridget takes the letter from her but she doesn't have the energy to open it. She hands it back to Gloria.

BRIDGET

Would you mind reading it to me?

GLORIA

Not at all.

Gloria unfolds the letter and reads:

GLORIA

Bridget, *

The conditions of the field have improved none. I don't suppose you care much. I've been hearing the United States have got more food than they know what to do with. Load up a boat I tell ya, and sail it all to Ireland you selfish pigs. *

Gloria stops and looks at Bridget.

BRIDGET

Keep reading.

GLORIA

Um,

She clears her throat and continues

GLORIA

Don't think I don't know you Americans don't share. Well Bridget, it would do ya good to remember your family. *

Gloria stops reading.

GLORIA

I don't think-

BRIDGET

Finish it.

Gloria hesitates but then continues.

GLORIA

I know you're holding back your earnings eating roast duck and wearing pearls while your family scrapes at the bottom of the barrel. Don't be a saphead. Send it along. We need it more than you do.

*

*

Sincerely,
Your Mam

Gloria checks in with Bridget, concerned.

BRIDGET

Is that the end of it?

Gloria nods slowly, but then changes her mind and shakes her head.

BRIDGET

Read it.

GLORIA

P.S. I got your note. Don't bother coming back for Christmas. We don't have the room.

*

Gloria folds up the letter.

GLORIA

That's it.

BRIDGET

Okay

Bridget rolls away from Gloria

GLORIA

I'm sorry.

BRIDGET

It's nothing.

GLORIA

Does she always write to you like that?

Bridget doesn't answer.

GLORIA

Why do you keep writing back?

BRIDGET

They need my help.

GLORIA

Do they?

BRIDGET

You read it. She said they're hungry.

GLORIA

Are you sure she's not just saying that?

BRIDGET

Why would they say it if it wasn't true?

GLORIA

Maybe to get you to send more money.

BRIDGET

She wouldn't do that.

GLORIA

She didn't even ask after your health.

BRIDGET

It would have been a bleak report anyway.

GLORIA

Curse her.

BRIDGET

She's me Mam.

GLORIA

That doesn't mean much. I'm a better mother to you than she is.

Beat

BRIDGET

She didn't even ask after me.

GLORIA

Oh Bridget...

BRIDGET

Everyone warned me this'd happen. Irish don't take kindly to their folks leaving for America, but me own Mam-

GLORIA

Don't send them any more.

BRIDGET

I don't have any more to send.

Bridget starts to cry but it turns into a coughing fit instead. Gloria helps her lay back down on her pillow.

GLORIA

It's okay. Slowly. Slowly. Breathe Bridge.

BRIDGET

My stomach!

GLORIA

When did you eat last?

Bridget looks away.

GLORIA

Bridge? Did you have dinner last night?

BRIDGET

No

GLORIA

What did you eat for lunch?

BRIDGET

I didn't.

GLORIA

Breakfast yesterday?

BRIDGET

I think I had something. A slice of bread.

GLORIA

Good Lord, Bridget! A slice of bread? I'm getting you something to eat.

Gloria stands to go.

BRIDGET

I don't have any food.

Gloria stops.

GLORIA

What do you mean?

BRIDGET

I don't have any money for food.

GLORIA

Then you'll eat something of mine.

Gloria leaves Bridget and starts downstairs.

Margot gets up to fetch the fresh loaf of bread she made.
She places it in front of Ariella.

ARIELLA

What are you doing?

MARGOT

I made it for you.

ARIELLA

Why?

MARGOT

It is my rocket.

Ariella stands up and backs away.

ARIELLA

Your what?

MARGOT

My rocket. Like Gloria.

ARIELLA

Well, I don't want anything to do with your 'rocket.'

MARGOT

It is yours if you decide you want it.

Gloria reaches the bottom of the stairs.

GLORIA

Did you know Bridget hasn't been eating?

ARIELLA

What?

Gloria begins to prepare food for Bridget.

GLORIA

Bridget hasn't eaten in at least a day. Her family's been robbing her blind.

MARGOT

Ach je

ARIELLA

She can have some of my food.

GLORIA

I'm giving her some of mine.

ARIELLA

Poor Bridge...

MARGOT

Take her a slice of my bread.

ARIELLA

I thought you said it was mine?

MARGOT

Oh, well, yes, if you want it--

ARIELLA

Take a slice to Bridget for me, please, Gloria.

Gloria rolls her eyes and cuts a slice.

MARGOT

Will you tell her I made it?

ARIELLA

Sucking up to all of us, I see. Very nice.

Ariella gets up and heads up the stairs. She goes to Bridget's room.

GLORIA

(to Margot)

Don't give up. She's a tough nut to crack, but you'll get her.

MARGOT

The rocket didn't work.

GLORIA

Maybe you need a bigger rocket.

Margot heads upstairs.

ARIELLA

How are you feeling?

BRIDGET

Not my best.

ARIELLA

Mr. Campbell asked me to go back to his apartment with him.

BRIDGET

Oh?

Margot stops outside Bridget's door, eavesdropping.

ARIELLA

I said I couldn't, that my roommates were waiting on me.

BRIDGET

That's good.

ARIELLA

He asked to reschedule for tonight instead. He says he has a big part in a Broadway play that I would be perfect for! So I said I'd check my schedule and give him a ring.

Bridget doesn't say anything.

ARIELLA

Bridge, did you hear me?

BRIDGET

Hm? Yes.

ARIELLA

What should I do?

BRIDGET

About what?

ARIELLA

Mr. Campbell. Should I call him?

BRIDGET

I suppose so, yes.

Margot slips into the room.

MARGOT

But if he invited you to his home he's after something specific.

Ariella jumps a little, startled

ARIELLA

Who the hell asked you?

MARGOT

I was walking past and heard you say--

ARIELLA

I didn't ask what you thought. I asked what Bridget thought.

MARGOT

Bridget is too sick to listen. She cannot give advice now.

ARIELLA

Why don't we see what Gloria thinks then.

Ariella heads down the stairs. Margot follows close behind.

ARIELLA

Hey Gloria, if you had the opportunity of a lifetime in your reach, but you had to do something you really didn't want to do to get it, would you?

GLORIA

Of course-

MARGOT

I don't think-

GLORIA

You make sacrifices to get what you want. It's part of life.

MARGOT

I don't think this is the same thing-

ARIELLA

Gloria is the smartest one here.

GLORIA

You've got that right.

ARIELLA

It's settled then. Thank you.

MARGOT

Ariella, I-

ARIELLA

It's settled. I don't want to talk about it anymore.

Ariella exits down the hall (offstage) to the phone.

MARGOT

You do not know what you've done...

GLORIA

What are you going on about?

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

Yes, I'd like to make a collect call to Richard Campbell please.

MARGOT

That was terrible advice.

GLORIA

What, you don't think she should sacrifice a little for what she wants? It wouldn't hurt her to start cutting down on the extra expenses.

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

Good morning Mr. Campbell, this is Ariella calling.

MARGOT

She's not talking about spending money. She is going to a producers house tonight. Alone.

GLORIA

She's what?!

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

I'd like to take you up on your offer for dinner tonight. I've always wanted to see the inside of a penthouse.

GLORIA

Ariella!

Gloria heads to the hallway as fast as she can.

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

Mhm, I'll be looking forward to it. Goodbye!

The phone clicks on the hook.

ARIELLA (OFF STAGE)

What's the matter with you?

The pair return to the kitchen.

GLORIA

Going to a man's house all alone at night? Have you lost your mind?

ARIELLA

You told me to go after what I want!

GLORIA

But not like this!

ARIELLA

It's a small sacrifice for the big stage.

MARGOT

It is larger than you might think.

GLORIA

Don't be ridiculous Ariella. You can't put yourself into a dangerous situation just to--

ARIELLA

I can take care of myself.

GLORIA

Then why did you need my advice?

ARIELLA

I just thought--

GLORIA

Somethings aren't meant to be used as leverage to get what you want.

ARIELLA

I am not going to have sex with Mr. Campbell if that's what you mean.

GLORIA

What do you think is going to happen?

ARIELLA

I'm going to make him think I want to have sex with him, and then leave him begging for more.

MARGOT

He could decide to take more.

GLORIA

Margot's right. You'll be all by yourself. What are you going to do if he decides he wants more.

ARIELLA

I'll charm my way out.

MARGOT

Men are animals.

GLORIA

You can't go to his house alone. It's not safe.

ARIELLA

I've already told him I'm going.

Ariella walks off up the stairs.

GLORIA

I'll tell Ms. Winslow!

Ariella freezes. She turns back.

ARIELLA

You breath a word to Ms. Winslow and I'll tell her you're the one who broke the ceiling!

GLORIA

I'm just looking out for you.

*

ARIELLA

I don't need looking out for.

*

Ariella barges up the stairs.

MRS ANDREWS knocks on her door. Gabriella gets up and answers it.

GABRIELLA

Hi

MRS ANDREWS welcomes herself in.

MRS ANDREWS

I was just walking by and I wondered if you'd finished up with that lease yet. I'd really like to have it back actually.

GABRIELLA

Oh, if I could hang onto it a little longer... I'm just not quite finished yet. I wanted to try to find some more information about her.

MRS ANDREWS

(Pulling another lease from her bag)

I found another one. I can give you this one and I'll just take that one back.

GABRIELLA

(taking the lease and reading it)

Gloria Moore?! This isn't the same Gloria Moore that did all that work on the Apollo 11 mission, is it?

MRS ANDREWS

I'm sure I don't know. Moore is a common name. I'm sure there's more than one.

GABRIELLA

But if this is the same this lease has got to be worth some real money!

MRS ANDREWS

Don't be ridiculous. It's just a lease. It's probably not even hers.

MRS ANDREWS fingers some crumpled papers.

MRS ANDREWS

It's gotten to be a bit of a mess in here.

GABRIELLA

I'm sorry, I'll clean it up. I've just been preoccupied.

MRS ANDREWS picks up one of the papers.

MRS ANDREWS

Is this your thesis?

She reads

MRS ANDREWS

In the second half of the 20th century the south needed more cheap labor, so the United States encouraged immigration from Mexico, becoming the most significant--

Gabriella snatches it out of her hand.

MRS ANDREWS

Fascinating. I didn't know that.

GABRIELLA

I'm not surprised. I cut that part out anyway actually. It didn't fit. Did you find out anything else about the house? Anything would help really. I've been losing steam. I'm a little distracted.

MRS ANDREWS

Well, I did find a few things.

GABRIELLA

What did you find?

MRS ANDREWS

There was a woman who owned this house from 1928 to 1949. Her name was Clara Winslow. She rented the house out to young women living the city alone. Most were immigrants, far away from family and friends.

GABRIELLA

(scrambling to write it down)

Clara Winslow?

MRS ANDREWS

Yes.

GABRIELLA

Do you have her ownership papers?

MRS ANDREWS

Not with me, no.

GABRIELLA

Do you know how long girls usually lived in the house?

MRS ANDREWS

I don't know.

GABRIELLA

And Bridget McCarthy was one of the tenants?

MRS ANDREWS

I suppose so.

GABRIELLA

And Gloria Moore?

MRS ANDREWS

She must have been.

GABRIELLA

Are you sure you don't have any more information about them?

MRS ANDREWS

I'm sure.

GABRIELLA

Another information about other girls who lived here?

MRS ANDREWS

That's all I have.

GABRIELLA

This is really great information. Really. Especially if Gloria Moore is *the* Gloria Moore.

MRS ANDREWS

Of course. Glad I could help.

GABRIELLA

Thank you. I really appreciate it.

Mrs. Andrews looks like she's about to say something but then stops.

GABRIELLA

Is there something else?

MRS ANDREWS

I was just... no. No there's nothing else. Have a good night dear.

GABRIELLA

You too Mrs. Andrews.

Mrs. Andrews exits.

Gabriella returns to her computer.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 6

Gloria and Margot are set up at the kitchen table, pouring over textbooks, pencils in hand.

MARGOT

(Groaning)

I do not understand!

GLORIA

It's okay. This is really cutting edge stuff. Try again. What can travel faster than light?

MARGOT

Nothing.

GLORIA

Right, but what travels faster: light through air or light through water?

MARGOT

Light through water?

GLORIA

Light through air. The water is an obstacle that the light has to push through, so it slows down.

Gloria picks up a glass of water on the table and sticks her pencil in it.

GLORIA

The light bends when it shines through water. That's what makes the pencil look broken.

MARGOT

So light travels faster when nothing is in its way.

GLORIA

Exactly.

MARGOT

But all the light is the same.

GLORIA

Yes. It's the obstacle that makes the difference.

MARGOT

This is too difficult for me. I want to go back to the laws of motion.

(Reciting)

An object in motion remains in motion until acted upon by an outside force.

GLORIA

If you're not going to let us study the hard stuff teach me more German.

MARGOT

Repeat after me. Ich hasse die Wissenschaft.

GLORIA

Ich hasse die Wissenschaft.

MARGOT

Good. What does it mean?

GLORIA

I hate the... What is Wissenschaft?

MARGOT

Science.

GLORIA

Hey! That was a dirty trick. Ich liebe die Wissenschaft!

Margot laughs

MARGOT

Sehr gut!

GLORIA

Teach me how to say light.

MARGOT

Licht.

GLORIA

Licht ist schnell. Licht wandert langsamer durch Wasser. Aber alles Licht ist gleich. Wie Menschen.

Bridget enters

GLORIA

Alles sind gleich.

Margot groans and rolls her eyes.

MARGOT

No more science.

BRIDGET

Are you making her study again?

GLORIA

She's got potential.

MARGOT

If I learned science as quickly as Gloria learned German I could beat your NASA into space myself!

Bridget takes a few dollar bills from her purse and hands them to Gloria.

GLORIA

What's this for?

BRIDGET

It's what I owe.

GLORIA

You don't owe me a cent Bridge.

BRIDGET

For all the food you've been giving me.

Gloria hands it back.

GLORIA

Think of it as a gift.

Bridget refuses to take it.

BRIDGET

I want to pay it back.

GLORIA

I can't take your money.

BRIDGET

It's alright. I have enough.

GLORIA

I know exactly how much you make Bridget. I keep your account books, don't forget.

BRIDGET

I'm not going to send any to Ireland anymore.

Gloria relents and takes the money. She pulls Bridget into a hug.

GLORIA

They don't deserve a penny.

BRIDGET

Let's leave it alone. Please.

GLORIA

I'm really proud of you.

BRIDGET

I'm afraid.

GLORIA

What for?

BRIDGET

Ireland isn't my home anymore.

GLORIA

America is your home now.

BRIDGET

I'm not a citizen.

GLORIA

You will be. One day.

Ariella comes home through the front door. She marches directly to the kitchen reaches for the cookie jar. She opens the lid to take one out, then decides one is not enough, and takes the whole jar with her to the table. Margot busies herself with a physics textbook.

GLORIA

How was rehearsal?

ARIELLA

How do you think?

BRIDGET

Did something happen?

ARIELLA

Nothing happened I just- Nothing happened.

Bridget sits down at the table with the rest of them.

GLORIA

Is it Mr. Campbell?

Ariella glares at Gloria.

ARIELLA

Everything with Richard is fine.

Ariella looks away from Gloria.

BRIDGET

What's going on with Mr. Cambell?

ARIELLA

Nothing. Acting is hard. That's all.

BRIDGET

But you're so good!

ARIELLA

Not as good as everyone else. I have so much to prove, and I feel miles behind the other actors.

MARGOT

You don't have anything to prove.

ARIELLA

They all think I'm just there because of Richard.

GLORIA

Well, aren't you?

MARGOT

Gloria!

GLORIA

No, that's the truth.

ARIELLA

I did what I had to do to get what I want. Nobody can say I didn't earn my place.

GLORIA

But what did it cost you?

ARIELLA

I took your advice Gloria! Don't tell me *now* it was rotten.

GLORIA

If I'd known the whole story to begin with I would never have-

MARGOT

I tried to tell you-

ARIELLA

(To Margot)

If I had taken your advice I wouldn't have a real acting job.

GLORIA

But if you'd taken her advice you wouldn't be stress eating an entire jar of Bridget's cookies right now.

BRIDGET

Will someone tell me what's going on please?

ARIELLA

I'm seeing Richard, okay? We're... I spend time with him and in exchange he got me a part in the show.

BRIDGET

(Horrified)

What?

ARIELLA

It's not a big deal.

GLORIA

It's stupid.

ARIELLA

It's not stupid.

BRIDGET

When did it start?

ARIELLA

After I went to dinner with him the first time.

BRIDGET

And you're still seeing him?

ARIELLA

You make it sound like an affair.

BRIDGET

Isn't it?

ARIELLA

Certainly not! I let him take me out to dinner and show me off around town-

GLORIA

And at the end of the night you go home to his bed-

ARIELLA

To his living room.

GLORIA

And what do you do there?

BRIDGET

Oh, Ariella.

Bridget makes the sign of the cross.

ARIELLA

That's none of your business.

BRIDGET

I thought better of you. I never thought you were a... a...

GLORIA

A whore.

Ariella stands up, cradling the jar of cookies in her arms.

ARIELLA

I am not a whore.

GLORIA

Then why are you so ashamed of yourself?

ARIELLA

I'm not ashamed.

GLORIA

Why didn't you tell Bridget then?

ARIELLA

I didn't-- I am *not* ashamed.

GLORIA

Then it shouldn't matter if the other actors think you're there because of Mr. Campbell.

ARIELLA

Of course it matters! They think I don't have talent, but I do. Richard wouldn't want me in the show if I didn't have talent.

GLORIA

He only cares about the talented hole between your legs.

MARGOT

Gloria!

Ariella drops the cookie jar and it shatters as she lunges for Gloria.

Margot shoots up from the table with a shriek and backs up against the wall.

Gloria tries to get away, not engaging in the fight.

ARIELLA

How dare you?

Ariella throws a punch. Gloria ducks it.

GLORIA

Am I wrong?

ARIELLA

You have no right!

MARGOT

Stop this fighting!

ARIELLA

I have never been anything but kind to you!

Gloria breaks away from Ariella.

GLORIA

Ariella, stop it!

Ariella lunges for Gloria again but Bridget steps in the way and catches her arm. Ariella is stronger, so Bridget's attempt to hold her back is almost comical.

BRIDGET

Stop it! Stop it!

Ariella relents.

ARIELLA

Fine.

Bridget lets go of her.

GLORIA

Don't blame me for telling you the truth.

Ariella charges Gloria again.

MARGOT

Please! Stop it! Please!

Gloria tries to hold Ariella back without hurting her.

GLORIA

Quit it! You're going to hurt yourself!

ARIELLA

Not until I hurt you first!

BRIDGET

(Shrieking)

Enough! Look what you've done!

Ariella stops. Gloria uses this moment to get up and get far away from Ariella.

ARIELLA

What?

BRIDGET

You've shattered my cookie jar! You've torn your clothes! You've scared Margot half to death! You've ruined this entire night!

ARIELLA

She called me a whore!

GLORIA

Bridge, I'm so sorry...

BRIDGET

Ariella I think what you're doing is wrong, and Gloria I don't think you should have said those things, but can't we just let it go? I just want everyone to enjoy a good meal. Is that too much to ask?

Beat.

Ariella stands up, brushes herself off and walks up the stairs. Margot follows her.

In 2017 there's a knock at the door. Gabriella, already in her pajamas checks the time, and goes to the door. It's Mrs. Andrews.

GABRIELLA

Mrs. Andrews! Is everything okay? It's a little late for a visit.

MRS ANDREWS

Oh yes everything is-- well, no I suppose everything is not fine.

GABRIELLA

What's wrong?

MRS ANDREWS

Were you intending to renew your lease this summer?

GABRIELLA

Yes?

MRS ANDREWS

I'm sorry... I'm so sorry, but I can't lease to you again.

GABRIELLA

What? What do you mean?

MRS ANDREWS

Well, this summer your permit will expire and you won't be a student anymore, which means you'll be here illegally and I can't, I *can't* break the law.

GABRIELLA

But I'm applying for graduate programs! I'll be a student again soon.

MRS ANDREWS

But this upcoming year you won't be, and I'm sorry, but I can't have that.

GABRIELLA

Why not? I thought you were against ending the DACA program?

MRS ANDREWS

I am! I just--

GABRIELLA

You're just kicking me out.

MRS ANDREWS

I can't break the law.

GABRIELLA

I don't know what you expect me to do.

MRS ANDREWS

I just wanted to let you know so it doesn't come as a surprise / when I don't renew your lease.

GABRIELLA

When you kick me out.

MRS ANDREWS

I'm sure there's something you can do to get on the path to legal citizenship.

Gabriella starts pacing pretty rapidly.

MRS ANDREWS

Especially with grad school on the horizon.

GABRIELLA

That's a long process...

MRS ANDREWS

But if you get started now--

GABRIELLA

I'd have to become a conditional permanent resident and then if I jump through all the hoops I would be eligible to become a lawful permanent resident.

MRS ANDREWS

But since you're--

GABRIELLA

And then it would be another five years before I can apply for citizenship.

MRS ANDREWS

Since you're a student, doesn't the process go faster?

GABRIELLA

No, not really, no.

MRS ANDREWS

But grad school should--

GABRIELLA

It won't make things go any faster. My permit is still going to expire before I can do any of that. If you would let me stay--

MRS ANDREWS

I'm sorry Gabriella. I want to do everything I can to help, but I can't help you break the law.

GABRIELLA

I don't think you would be breaking any laws.

MRS ANDREWS

I just... there was a landlord in Kansas city who was arrested and charged with harboring a fugitive. I'm not well-versed in legal jargon, so I'm not prepared to take any risks. I hope you can understand.

GABRIELLA

Hm.

MRS ANDREWS

I've read the renting laws are extremely relaxed in California. Maybe you could try there!
I'd be happy to write a letter of recommendation for you.

GABRIELLA

I'll be out by the end of the semester.

MRS ANDREWS

Oh don't be silly, that's next week!

GABRIELLA

It's as good a time as any.

MRS ANDREWS

I really am sorry about this Gabriella.

GABRIELLA

(as if to say "don't be sorry. Do something
about it")

Don't be.

MRS ANDREWS

Please, you've got to understand I have to protect myself.

GABRIELLA

From what? Deportation? You're an American citizen! No. You're a *white* American citizen. What do you need protection from?

MRS ANDREWS

I can't break the law Gabriella, I'm sorry.

GABRIELLA

Get out.

MRS ANDREWS

Excuse me?

GABRIELLA

I would like you to leave, please. I am still renting this apartment and this is my space.
You need to go.

MRS ANDREWS

I'm sorry, Gabriella please forgive me.

Gabriella opens the door and waits for Mrs. Andrews to leave.

MRS ANDREWS

I'll stop by tomorrow to check in.

GABRIELLA

Please don't.

MRS ANDREWS

You've always been like family to me--

GABRIELLA

If this is how you treat family, I'm not surprised your husband left you.

Mrs. Andrews absorbs this blow, turns on her heel, and leaves. Gabriella closes the door behind her and takes a look around her room. She takes a moment, but then she begins to pack.

Gloria turns to Bridget.

GLORIA

I didn't mean to start a fight.

BRIDGET

Leave it alone.

Bridget begins to sweep up the broken glass.

GLORIA

I'm sorry about the cookie jar. I'll buy you a new one.

BRIDGET

My mother gave it to me.

Beat.

GLORIA

I'm really sorry.

Bridget continues to clean up the mess that is the kitchen in silence. Gloria watches her for a few seconds, but soon starts to help her.

Upstairs in Ariella and Margot's room, Ariella is sitting in front of her mirror examining her knuckles. She'll have some bruises tomorrow. Margot sits on her bed, watching Ariella.

MARGOT

It does not matter what you've done with him.

ARIELLA

I don't really care what you think about it.

MARGOT

I want you to know nothing he's made you do makes you a... whore.

ARIELLA

He hasn't made me do anything.

MARGOT

I just want you to know.

ARIELLA

I know, okay? I know.

MARGOT

I hate that she called you that.

ARIELLA

Look, I'm sure you're trying to help, but I don't want to hear it.

Margot falls silent. Ariella looks back to her mirror. A moment passes.

MARGOT

Back home my mother and I were very hungry, but I made an arrangement with a soviet soldier. I gave him what he wanted and he gave us food. You do what you have to do, but it is not as easy as you think it will be.

ARIELLA

Did you stop?

MARGOT

I left.

Ariella looks away from her reflection in the mirror and takes off her dress, getting ready for bed. She pulls a robe on over her slip.

MARGOT

Mr. Campbell is not soldier. If you want to stop you can stop.

ARIELLA

But what would it cost me?

The girls get ready for bed.

LIGHTS FADE.

SCENE 7

In 2017 Gabriella has half packed boxes stacked around her. She spends the scene emptying her apartment into these boxes.

In 1949 Bridget is in the kitchen making breakfast, cheerfully humming 'The Leaving of Liverpool' to herself. Gloria is upstairs in their room quietly packing two bags. It is early morning. Gloria adds her books to the top of her suitcase and closes it up. She puts on her coat.

BRIDGET

(singing)

So fare thee well my own true love.

Bridget goes back to humming. Gloria takes one last look around the room. She stops next to Bridget's bed. She gets a piece of paper from Bridget's desk and writes a quick note. She stuff it under Bridget's pillow.

BRIDGET

(Singing)

And I will write to thee a letter, love,

Bridget goes back to humming. Gloria grabs her bags and quietly exits, refusing to look back.

She sets a textbook on the floor outside Margot and Ariella's room, before creeping down the stairs as quietly as possible.

BRIDGET

(Singing)

It's not the leaving of Liverpool that grieves me
But my darling when I think of thee

Bridget has her back to Gloria and doesn't hear her enter over her own singing. Gloria creeps towards the front door on her toes. Bridget goes back to humming. Gloria is almost to the door when Bridget turns around and notices her.

BRIDGET

Where are you off to?

GLORIA

Um, just out.

BRIDGET

Why are your bags packed?

GLORIA

I'm going home to visit my mother.

BRIDGET

For how long?

GLORIA

Uh, well, she's- I don't know.

BRIDGET

Is everything okay?

GLORIA

Yes everything's fine. She just needs a little help for a few days.

BRIDGET

Oh, okay. Well, at least eat some breakfast before you go.

Bridget begins preparing her a plate.

GLORIA

I can't. I have to catch the 9:00am train.

Upstairs, Margot comes out of her room and sees the textbook on the ground. She picks it up, looks at it for a moment and then runs down the stairs.

Bridget rolls her eyes and wraps a scone in a napkin.

BRIDGET

Then take a scone for the road.

GLORIA

Thanks.

BRIDGET

Write me as soon as you get there.

GLORIA

I will. Cross my heart.

Margot arrives in the kitchen.

MARGOT

You're leaving so soon?! I thought you still had a few more days!

GLORIA

Uh, turns out I have to go today.

MARGOT

You weren't even going to say goodbye?

GLORIA

I didn't want to wake you.

Margot gives her a long hard hug.

MARGOT

Thank you for everything.

BRIDGET

What are you getting all steamy eyed for! She'll be back before we know it.

Margot looks at Bridget, confused. She looks at Gloria.

MARGOT

Back? What does she mean you'll be back?

BRIDGET

What do you mean what do I mean? Course she'll be back.

MARGOT

Gloria...

GLORIA

Well, I have to get going. I'll miss the bus.

BRIDGET

Bus? I thought you said you were catching the train?

GLORIA

Train. Right. Slip of the tongue.

MARGOT

Gloria.

GLORIA

I'll see you all soon. Don't burn the place down while I'm gone!

Gloria starts to exit. Bridget runs and grabs her arm.

BRIDGET

Wait. What's going on?

GLORIA

Nothing. I need to catch my train.

MARGOT

Don't leave it like this.

BRIDGET

You're scaring me! Where are you going?

MARGOT

Gloria.

Gloria sighs.

GLORIA

Bridge, promise you won't be mad.

BRIDGET

I can't promise until I know what this is about.

GLORIA

It's not as bad as it seems. Everything is going to be fine.

BRIDGET

Out with it!

GLORIA

I got into Cornell. I need to catch the nine a.m. bus to Ithaca.

BRIDGET

What?

GLORIA

I'm going to school, Bridge. A real science program.

BRIDGET

Ithaca? You can't!

GLORIA

It's only a six hour bus ride. You can come visit.

BRIDGET

Six hours? When am I going to have time for a twelve hour round trip?

GLORIA

On the weekends?

BRIDGET

I work weekends. You'll be working weekends. Everybody here is working weekends.

GLORIA

It'll be okay Bridge.

BRIDGET

And you were just going to walk out without saying a word?

GLORIA

I left a note under your pillow.

BRIDGET

A note?! You were going to say goodbye with a note?!

GLORIA

I didn't want- This is too hard Bridge. This is too hard.

Gloria walks toward the door again. Bridget snatches a suitcase out of her hand.

GLORIA

What are you doing? Give it back!

BRIDGET

You're not leaving. I won't let you.

Gloria sets down her other bag and walks towards Bridget. Bridget backs away from her.

GLORIA

Bridge give it back.

BRIDGET

No.

Gloria lunges for her, and catches her arm.

GLORIA

Bridge.

BRIDGET

Let go!

GLORIA

This is my dream.

BRIDGET

But we're family! You don't give up family for dreams.

GLORIA

Don't you?

Bridget rips her arm away from Gloria.

BRIDGET

Not me. This is my dream. You and Margot and Ariella and this house.

GLORIA

And you'll still have me. I'll just be in Ithaca.

BRIDGET

That's not the same! You'll forget to write. You'll never visit. You won't have the time. Pretty soon you'll forget all about me!

GLORIA

It won't be like it was with your family. I promise. I'll ask after you. I'll come home for your birthday and Christmas, as long as you're still here.

BRIDGET

But I won't be here. None of us will be here. If you leave Ms. Winslow will lose the house. She won't take on another tenant, I know it! She didn't want Margot here as it was!

MARGOT

She didn't?

GLORIA

It'll be fine.

BRIDGET

How can you say that?

GLORIA

Because everything is fine in the end.

BRIDGET

It'll be fine for you! You're going to school, getting a degree. You don't care what happens to us.

GLORIA

Of course I do!

BRIDGET

If you really cared you would stay.

GLORIA

This is what I've always dreamed about! Things like this don't just get handed to people like me. I have to give it everything I've got.

BRIDGET

I hope it's worth it.

Bridget backs away.

GLORIA

Can I have my suitcase please?

Bridget tightens her grip on the bag.

GLORIA

I have to catch my bus.

Bridget suddenly throws the bag at Gloria. Gloria maybe catches it, maybe not.

BRIDGET

Fine! Take your bag! Go!

GLORIA

Bridget...

Gloria steps towards her.

BRIDGET

I never want to hear from you again!

GLORIA

Please don't make me leave like this.

BRIDGET

I'm not making you do anything.

GLORIA

I'm sorry Bridge. I'm really sorry.

Gloria gathers her bags. Bridget turns her back.

GLORIA

Goodbye Bridge.

Bridget doesn't turn around.

GLORIA

Bye Margot.

MARGOT

Write us when you get there.

I will.

GLORIA

Gloria steps out the door, closing it behind her.

Bridget busies herself with breakfast.

MARGOT

She had to go, Bridget.

BRIDGET

It's not fair.

MARGOT

It never is.

BRIDGET

She didn't tell me. She should have told me.

MARGOT

I think she was afraid to.

BRIDGET

Coward.

Ms. Winslow comes home through the front door.

MS. WINSLOW

(Saying hello)

Girls

MARGOT

Hello Ms. Winslow.

MS. WINSLOW

What's going on?

MARGOT

Gloria-

BRIDGET

Nothing! We just had a fight that's all.

MS. WINSLOW

Gloria left this morning?

BRIDGET
What?

MARGOT
Yes

BRIDGET
She told you?

MS. WINSLOW
Of course she told me. I'll need you three to start looking for another place to live.

BRIDGET
No! Ms. Winslow, please. I can find another roommate!

MS. WINSLOW
No Bridget, I'm sorry, but I'm finished. It's time to move on.

MARGOT
It is over.

BRIDGET
No! It can't be over.

MS. WINSLOW
There are other houses.

BRIDGET
No there aren't! I've been in this one since the beginning.

MARGOT
Everyone moves. We will find a way.

BRIDGET
Not me. I want to be done moving.

MARGOT
We are too young to be done moving.

MS. WINSLOW
I'm clearing out and moving to my sisters at the end of the month.

BRIDGET
You can't! Where will we go? It's hard enough to find a house if you have your citizenship papers, but--

MS. WINSLOW

She has a yard and a flower garden. I can go outside and sit and watch the birds and butterflies. I can breath.

BRIDGET

I'm going to find another girl. Don't you worry.

Bridget heads for the door.

MS. WINSLOW

I won't take her Bridget. It's time to move on.

Bridget exits as Ariella bursts in the front door. Ms. Winslow excuses herself to her room.

ARIELLA

(Calling through the house)

Gloria!

MARGOT

She left.

ARIELLA

Did she say when she'll be back?

MARGOT

She's not coming back.

ARIELLA

What?

MARGOT

She took her bags and moved to Ithaca. She has gone to school.

ARIELLA

She's gone?

MARGOT

That is what I said.

ARIELLA

For good?

MARGOT

Yes.

ARIELLA

But-- I need to talk to her.

MARGOT

You missed her by just a few minutes.

ARIELLA

When is she coming back?

MARGOT

She's not.

ARIELLA

You mean it?

MARGOT

I do.

ARIELLA

I just wanted to tell her-- I wanted her to be proud of me.

*

MARGOT

For what?

ARIELLA

I do things she should be proud of!

MARGOT

I never said otherwise.

ARIELLA

I broke it off with Mr. Campbell.

MARGOT

That is wonderful!

ARIELLA

Isn't it? I told him if he's so desperate for love he should be nicer to his mother!

MARGOT

Oh, Ariella!

ARIELLA

I've never felt more powerful in my life.

MARGOT

I am not Gloria, but I am proud of you.

Ariella considers this for a moment.

ARIELLA

Thank you.

MARGOT

How did he take it?

ARIELLA

I'm out of the show.

MARGOT

Oh, Ariella...

ARIELLA

No pity. I want to earn my place on the stage because I'm undeniably talented, not because I played some sick producer's games.

MARGOT

Gloria would be so proud.

ARIELLA

Hey, do you think you could teach me how to do a German accent? You know, so I can add it to my resume.

MARGOT

I could try. We won't have much time though.

ARIELLA

What do you mean?

MARGOT

We'll have to leave. With Gloria gone Ms. Winslow is selling the house.

ARIELLA

What?!

MARGOT

We all have to be out by the end of the month.

ARIELLA

Bridget won't let that happen.

MARGOT

She is out searching for a new girl as we speak, but Ms. Winslow has already said it will not matter.

ARIELLA

How does she expect us to find a new place to live in a month?

MARGOT

It is her house. It is her right.

ARIELLA

Where are *you* going?

MARGOT

I do not know.

Ariella sits down at the table.

ARIELLA

What was I thinking?

MARGOT

What?

ARIELLA

I just lost my job!

MARGOT

Perhaps Bridget and I could--

ARIELLA

I had a job as an actress and I-- I-- I--

MARGOT

(putting a hand on Ariella's arm)

You did the right thing.

Ariella looks at Margot's hand touching her. She stands up, closing off.

ARIELLA

I, well, uh, thanks. For listening or whatever.

Ariella heads upstairs. Margot watches her go.

In 2017 Gabriella picks up the last box in her apartment and takes one last look at the empty room, before leaving. She closes and locks the door behind her, and walks down the stairs with the final box, passing by Ariella. She walks out the front door and exits.

SCENE 9

The house is completely still and empty. In 2017 Mrs Andrews walks in the front door. She heads up the stairs and knocks on Gabriella's door.

MRS ANDREWS

Gabriella?

There is no answer.

MRS ANDREWS

Please, can we talk?

Still no answer.

MRS ANDREWS

I have a confession to make. I'm not-- I never became-- Gabriella please, I need you to hear me out.

Still no answer.

She takes out her keys and unlocks the door. She slowly steps into the empty room and walks the length of it. She opens a drawer in the desk and pulls out a letter.

In 1949 Bridget comes home, defeated. She steps on a letter that has been dropped through the front door. She picks it up. She tears it open. As she begins to read we hear Gloria's voice.

GLORIA (OFF)

Dear Bridge,

I'm sorry it's taken me so long to write. This first month has been so busy. I'll spare you the details. I hope you're doing well. You should come visit soon! It's a little harder for me to get away than I thought it would be. They've loaded us up with so much work. Maybe you should think about school, Bridge. It'd be good for you to get out of that house. I had to leave, you know. I'm not sorry for that. I *am* sorry I didn't know how to tell you. I wish we hadn't left it that way. Can you forgive me?

I love you with all my heart.
Yours,
Gloria

Bridget closes the letter and runs up the stairs.

BRIDGET

Margot?

No answer.

BRIDGET

Ariella?

No answer.

Bridget throws open their bedroom door. She surveys the bare room and steps inside.

Mrs Andrews turns and the two women see each other.

★

END OF PLAY

Appendix H

Public Reading and Feedback Notes

— The Bushwick Girls — 4/20/19 —

- The letter Gloria gets is her first rejection. get rid of the letter in scene 1
- "It is ~~a letter~~ from my mother"
- Make Gabriella's apartment Bridget & Gloria's room.
- Mrs. Andrews lives in Mrs. Winslow's old room.
- "ownership papers"? would that be a "deed"
- "Gloria, please don't take the Lord's"

Feedback

- About judging ppl on who ~~we~~ ^{they are} think ^{vs. what ~~they~~ are}
- new Mrs. Andrews was Bridget early on,
- curious about how she got the house, but ~~do~~ not sure if we need to know that for the play.
- more Mrs. Andrews back story
- find another thing that connects the timelines themselves.
 - ↳ more Mrs. Andrews info revealed through the documents.
- Make Gabriella makes that connection
- What are Gabriella's stakes?
- Didn't know why ~~we~~ wanted the audience to wonder about Mrs. Andrews being Bridget.
- Maybe a photo
- more ~~the~~ rockets (rule of 3s)

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- The revelation about Margot & the Soviet soldier needs to be bigger so that Ariella understands the weight of it.
- Gabriella finds out about Gloria → how does this affect Mrs. Andrews
- If Gabriella finds out Mrs. Andrews is illegal → BIG CONFRONTATION
- Yiddish moments? → too to not talk to Margot
- German moments beyond the teaching
- Spanish phone call → more spanglish.
- Ms. Winslow = Italian?
 - ↳ perhaps forced to sell the house?
 - ↳ transfer of ownership to Mrs. Andrews?
- Factual ambiguity still has to be emotionally satisfying
- Theme: people coming in and out of our lives.
- expand to a 2 act.
- Think about time line of present story & timeline of past story.
- what's at stake → Gabriella especially
 - ↳ what if she quits early on?
 - ↳ something totally new comes up and draws her into this thing she's trying to solve.

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